

FOREST MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Faculty/Staff Handbook 2025-2026



325 Cleveland Street
Forest, MS 39074
(601) 469-3250

www.forest.k12.ms.us

Approved by Forest Municipal School District School Board on June 23, 2025

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been developed to inform faculty and staff of the guidelines, policies, and procedures of the Forest Municipal School District. It is provided as a guide to assist faculty and staff with performing their assigned duties in the most effective and efficient manner possible.

We believe that all children can learn; therefore, it is our goal to provide educational activities that meet or exceed the diverse needs of our students. The support and encouragement of faculty and staff are vital to the educational success of our students, schools, and community.

As members of the Forest Municipal School District staff, it is very important that you become familiar with the entire contents of this handbook and use it as a reference guide throughout the school year. Together, we can make a difference in providing our students with a safe, nurturing, and rewarding educational experience.

MISSION STATEMENT

We are a district that is learner centered and equity focused.

QUALITY EDUCATION FOR EVERY STUDENT

OUR BELIEFS

- All children can learn.
- A commitment to continuous improvement is imperative if our school is going to enable students to become confident, self-directed, life-long learners.
- Teachers, staff, administrators, parents, students, and community members share in the responsibility for providing a supportive learning environment within our school.
- A safe and physically comfortable environment promotes student learning.
- Each student is a valued individual with unique intellectual, physical, social, and emotional needs.
- Students learn in different ways and should be provided with a variety of instructional approaches to support their learning.
- Student learning is the chief priority for our schools.
- Assessments of student learning should provide students with a variety of opportunities to demonstrate their achievement and real contexts to apply their learning.

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION (SECTION 504)

<p>It is the policy of the Forest Municipal School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability in its educational programs or employment policies. Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 1964 Civil Rights Act and other related components should be directed to Reagan Shoemaker, Title IX Coordinator and ShaTerria Warren, 504 Coordinator in person at Forest Municipal School District, 325 Cleveland Street, Forest, MS 39074, by telephone at (601) 469-3250 ext. 1013 or 1014 or through email at rshoemaker@forest.k12.ms.us or swarren@forest.k12.ms.us.</p>
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Employee Handbook Disclaimer:

Handbooks issued to employees of the Forest Municipal School District shall not be viewed as a contract of employment. This handbook does not create substantive or procedural rights for any employee. It is provided for the purpose of guidance only, and is subject to amendment by the Forest Municipal School District Board of Trustees at any time, without prior notification to any employee.

FOREST MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Mr. Charles Longmire, President
 Mr. Sean Ferrell, Vice President
 Ms. Mattye Evans, Secretary
 Ms. Chantelle Herchenhahn, Member
 Ms. Louvene Robinson, Member

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF	
Dr. Melanie Nelson	Superintendent
Dr. Marcus Holbert	Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Reagan Shoemaker	Director of Federal Program, Curriculum, & Student Improvement
Mrs. Rachel Miles	MSIS Coordinator & Assistant to the Federal Programs Director
Mr. Tracy Adcock	Coordinator of Assessment & English Learners
Ms. Tyresia Love	MTSS Coordinator, Pre-K Manager, & Public Relations
Mrs. ShaTerria Warren	Director of Exceptional Services & Personnel
Mrs. Willie Ealy	Special Education Secretary
Mr. Jeff Jones	Business Manager
Mr. Timothy Ringo	Technology Director
Mr. Samuel Crotwell	Technology Network Administrator
Mr. Carlos Moore	Technology Assistant
Ms. Shawanda Dotson	Assistant Business Manager & Child Nutrition Director
Ms. Margaret Cox	Child Nutrition Facilitator
Ms. Vivian McGee	Executive Secretary: Superintendent & Board, 16 th Section
Ms. Phatosha Derrick	Payroll
Mr. Barah Jennings	Maintenance Director
Mr. Vincent Jones	Transportation Director
Ms. Keisha Bobbitt	Nurse
Mrs. Odena McBride	Nurse
Mr. Coshune Bingham	School Resource Officer
Mr. Jaylon Lofton	School Resource Officer

SCHOOLS, ADMINISTRATION AND CONTACT INFORMATION		
Forest Elementary School 513 Cleveland Street Forest, MS 39074 601-469-3073 X 4 (Office) 601-469-8252 (Fax)	Dr. Ebony Donelson-Crosby Mr. Khary Orr Mrs. Lynn Atkison	Principal Assistant Principal Counselor
Hawkins Middle School 803 Oak Street Forest, MS 39074 601-469-1474 X 3 (Office) 601-469-8251 (Fax)	Ms. Lindsay White Dr. Darla Lofton Mrs. Kristi Wade	Principal Assistant Principal Counselor
Forest High School 511 Cleveland Street Forest, MS 39074 601-469-3255 X 2 (Office) 601-469-8250 (Fax)	Mr. Matthew Wade Mrs. Tonya Davis Mrs. Anna-Alicia Doyle Mr. Tobias Lofton	Principal Assistant Principal Counselor Athletic Coordinator

ABSENCE FROM DUTY POLICY

All requests for leave must be approved by your principal or immediate supervisor in advance. This is done by entering an electronic request via the time clock to the appropriate principal or director. If an emergency should arise, **you must contact your supervisor directly** and enter an electronic request via the time clock upon your return to work. Administrators and directors requesting leave must do so in advance by entering an electronic request via the time clock or submitting an Official Leave Form to the superintendent.

A half-day's absence will be charged to any faculty member who is absent from school for three periods or more during a typical school day, or hours accumulated over a period of days at the discretion of the principal/supervisor. In general, absences during the hours of 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. or 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. shall constitute a half-day at schools. Some schools may differ slightly due to their reporting and dismissal times.

All district employees are required to use the electronic time clock (TIME TRUST) to clock in and out at their designated work location daily. Failure of any employee to clock in and out properly may result in a payroll check reduction error. Employees are limited to two time edits per month unless approved by the superintendent. Office personnel at each school location shall monitor the time clock process to verify that no employee works for more than 40 hours per week without notice of approval from the superintendent and/or designee to receive overtime compensation. Office personnel shall send all documentation to the central office each week. **ONLY THE SUPERINTENDENT(S)** shall be authorized to approve overtime whenever necessary. All requests for overtime must be made directly to the superintendent of schools in advance of performing any additional work/duties, unless an emergency situation arises.

Employees are not allowed to leave during work hours, including leave during planning periods unless it is a school function or an emergency. Employees who find it necessary to leave during the school day for any reason **must have permission from their principal/director in advance** so the appropriate arrangements can be made. Employees who consistently report late to work, or otherwise abuse the leave policy will be reprimanded and be subject to non-renewal or termination.

LICENSED EMPLOYEE - DEFINED

The term "licensed employee" means any employee of a public school district required to hold a valid license by the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development.

SICK LEAVE ALLOWANCE

The school board of this district shall establish by rules and regulations a policy of sick leave with pay for all full-time licensed employees employed in the school district and such policy shall include the following minimum provisions for sick emergency leave with pay:

- a. Beginning with each new school year, **full-time employees** (187 days) shall be credited with a minimum of seven (7) days sick leave allowance, with pay, to be used for absences caused by illness or physical disability during that specific school year.
- b. Employees on extended contracts will be credited with sick leave as follows:
 - 10 Month (204 - 213 days) = 8 days of annual sick leave
 - 11 Month (214 - 225 days) = 9 days of annual sick leave
 - 12 Month (226 - 230 days) = 10 days of annual sick leave

Sick leave days as mentioned above may be taken with pay for the following reasons:

1. **Illness or physical disability of the employee** – If the illness requires an absence of three (3) or more consecutive days, then a doctor's or medical practitioner's certificate shall be presented upon return to school. The same type of certificate shall be required if an absence of two (2) or more days occurs immediately before or after a non-school day.
2. **Emergency** – Emergency is defined as being a death of one whose family relation includes the words "parent, spouse, sibling, stepparent, child, stepchild" or any dependent living in the home of the employee. These individuals are considered immediate family members.
3. **Illness in immediate family** – Immediate family is defined in section 2 above. Family members outside of the definition may be included at the discretion of the building principal or superintendent.

a. Any unused portion of the total sick leave allowance shall be carried over to the next school year and credited to such licensed employee if the licensed employee remains employed in the same school district. In the event any public school licensed employee transfers from one (1) public school district in Mississippi to another, any unused portion of the total sick leave allowance credited to such licensed employee shall be credited to such licensed employee in the computation of unused leave for retirement purposes under Section 25-11-109,

Mississippi Code of 1972. Accumulation of sick leave allowed in the district shall be unlimited.

b. No deduction from the pay of such licensed employee may be made because of absence of such licensed employee caused by illness or physical disability of the licensed employee until after all sick leave allowance credited to such licensed employee has been used.

c. After use of accumulated sick leave, the substitute rate will be deducted from the salary of the absent teacher for the next ten (10) days when a doctor's excuse is provided. These ten (10) days cannot be used until all prior accumulated leave has been expended.

The Forest Municipal School District Board of Trustees has established rules and regulations which shall have the following general effect on district employees as listed below:

- a. In the event of a "materially" false statement by any employee as to be cause of absence, then penalties will include a full deduction of pay, entry on the work record of the employee, or other appropriate penalties.
- b. Accumulated or future sick leave will be forfeited if any employee's absence is caused by optional dental or medical treatment which could have been provided without medical risk at a time when school was not in session.
- c. Any absences not covered by sick leave and/or personal leave policy will receive no pay for the day or days missed and will be subject to disciplinary action for failure to meet contractual obligations.

3. PERSONAL LEAVE ALLOWANCE (MS CODE: 37-7-307)

Each full-time employee (187 days) at the beginning of each school year shall be credited with a personal leave allowance, with pay, of two (2) days for absences caused by personal reasons during that school year. Personal leave may be used for professional purposes, including absences caused by attendance of such licensed employee at a seminar, class, training program, professional association or other functions designed for educators. No deduction from the pay of such employee may be made because of absence of such licensed employee caused by personal reasons until after all personal leave allowance credited to such employee has been used. **The use of personal days must be approved in advance by the principal of each school.**

An employee who wishes to take one (1) or more days of personal leave shall submit an electronic request via the time clock to the principal no less than seven (7) working days prior to the day of the proposed personal leave unless an emergency arises. If an emergency arises, employees must contact their principal/director directly.

Personal leave shall not be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, the day immediately before a holiday or the day immediately after a holiday, unless approved by the superintendent.

Certified employees and other instructional personnel shall not take personal leave during statewide testing unless an emergency arises. Principals should not approve personal leave for more than 10% of their certified staff at any given time unless an emergency arises.

4. PROFESSIONAL LEAVE ALLOWANCE (SCHOOL RELATED LEAVE)

Licensed employees shall be credited with a professional leave allowance, with pay, for each day of absence caused by reason of such employee's statutorily required membership and attendance at a regular or special meeting held within the State of Mississippi of the State Board of Education, the Commission on Teacher and Administrator Education, Certification and Licensure and Development, the Commission on School Accreditation, the Mississippi Authority for Educational Television and the meetings of the state textbook rating committees.

Meals may be reimbursed for approved overnight stays ONLY. Employees do not get automatically reimbursed for meals unless they actually had to purchase meals during an overnight stay. They must request reimbursement up to a maximum pay rate per day and should attach all receipts.

Mileage may be reimbursed for approved professional leave ONLY, and is calculated from the school/work location to the workshop location or from the employee's home to the workshop location – whichever location is closer.

NOTE: PROFESSIONAL LEAVE must be submitted in advance by an electronic request via the time clock or by using the Official Leave Form to the Principal/Director for approval or approved in advance by the Superintendent. Should an emergency arise, the Superintendent may grant a verbal approval.

5. RETIREMENT

Upon retirement from employment, each licensed and nonlicensed employee shall be paid for not more than thirty (30) days of unused accumulated leave earned while employed by the school district in which the employee is last employed. Such payment for licensed employees shall be made by the school district at a rate equal to the amount paid to substitute teachers and for nonlicensed employees, the payment shall be made by the school district at a rate equal to the federal minimum wage. The payment shall be treated in the same manner for retirement purposes as a

lump sum payment for personal leave as provided in Section 25-11-103 (e).

Any remaining lawfully credited unused leave, for which payment has not been made, shall be certified to the Public Employees' Retirement System in the same manner and subject to the same limitations as otherwise provided by law for unused leave.

6. DONATED SICK LEAVE

“Catastrophic injury or illness” means a life-threatening injury or illness of an employee or a member of an employee’s immediate family that totally incapacitates the employee from work, as verified by a licensed physician, and forces the employee to exhaust all leave time earned by that employee, resulting in the loss of compensation from the employee. Conditions that are short-term in nature, including, but not limited to, common illnesses such as influenza and the measles, and common injuries, are not catastrophic. Chronic illnesses or injuries, such as cancer or major surgery, that result in intermittent absences from work and that are long-term in nature and require long recuperation periods may be considered catastrophic.

- Before an employee may receive donated leave, he or she must provide the school district superintendent or his designee with a physician’s statement that states the beginning date of the catastrophic injury or illness, a description of the injury or illness, and a prognosis for recovery and the anticipated date that the recipient employee will be able to return to work.
- Any school district employee may donate a portion of his or her unused accumulated personal leave or sick leave to another employee of the same school district who is suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness or who has a member of his or her immediate family suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness, in accordance with the following:
 - The employee donating the leave (the “donor employee”) shall designate the employee who is to receive the leave (the “recipient employee”) and the amount of unused accumulated personal leave and sick leave that is to be donated, and shall notify the school district superintendent or his designee of his or her designation.
 - The maximum amount of unused accumulated personal leave that an employee may donate to any other employee may not exceed a number of days that would leave the donor employee with fewer than seven (7) days of personal leave remaining, and the maximum amount of unused accumulated sick leave that an employee may donate to any other employee may not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the unused accumulated sick leave of the donor employee.
 - An employee must have exhausted all of his or her accumulated personal leave and sick leave before he or she will be eligible to receive any leave donated by another employee. Eligibility for donated leave shall be based upon review and approval by the donor employee’s supervisor.
 - If the total amount of leave that is donated to any employee is not used by the recipient employee, the whole days of donated leave shall be returned to the donor employees on a pro rata basis, based on the ratio of the number of days of leave donated by each donor employee to the total number of days of leave donated by all donor employees.
- Donated leave shall not be used in lieu of disability retirement. §37-7-307

7. JURY DUTY / OTHER LEAVE

- The FMSD school board shall provide leave with pay for employees who serve as witnesses under subpoena and/or on juries. Any fees collected during this type of duty shall belong solely to that employee. The employee shall be responsible for providing a copy of the summons to the Superintendent’s Office and completing an electronic request via the time clock or an Official Leave Form (Reference: FMSD Policy GBRI).

8. PAYMENT OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS (VIA KELLY SERVICES)

- **Certified positions** such as teacher, librarian, counselor, principal, etc. shall be paid as follows:

<u>CERTIFIED</u> :.....	\$100.00/day
<u>NON-CERTIFIED</u> :.....	\$80.00/day
- **Non-Certified positions** such as substitute teacher’s aide, ISS, etc. shall be paid as follows:

<u>ANY</u> :.....	\$80.00/day
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9. PAYMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MAINTENANCE AND CAFETERIA WORKERS (VIA FMSD)

- **Non-Certified positions** such as substitute cafeteria workers and maintenance workers shall be paid a minimum wage of \$10.00 per hour according to the federal minimum wage law from the U.S. Department of Labor. The superintendent at his discretion may negotiate a higher wage per hour if necessary.

10. FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

- See APPENDIX I or contact Phatosha Derrick at the FMSD Central Office for more information.

**ACADEMIC INFORMATION:
REGISTRATION - GRADING SYSTEM – TRANSFER – WITHDRAWAL**

REGISTRATION -- Each student is given a course selection form each spring on which he/she and his/her parents/guardians select a program of studies for the following year. The counselor is available to assist parents/guardians and students with program planning. After all choices have been made and proper entries completed, the parent/guardian must sign the course selection form indicating final approval.

The school reserves the right to make any necessary schedule changes based on achievement test scores and the student's individual learning needs.

SCHEDULE CHANGES -- Schedule changes **WILL NOT** be permitted after the school year begins unless: (1) the course has been dropped from the master schedule due to insufficient demand; (2) a scheduling error has been made by the counselor; (3) the school administration deems the change necessary.

GRADING SYSTEM -- Students in grades 1-12 are assigned numerical grades. No grade higher than 100 shall be posted unless it is an accelerated or advanced placement course. Grade verification sheets must be turned in to counselors at the end of each nine weeks.

GRADING SCALE FOREST ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
<p>A standard numerical grading scale is maintained in the Forest Municipal School District. Students will be assigned grades as follows:</p> <p>A = <u>90-100</u> B = <u>80-89</u> C = <u>70-79</u> D = <u>65-69</u> F = <u>64 and below</u></p>
<p><u>Kindergarten</u> students use a different report card and grading system. Multiple criteria will be utilized to determine promotion/retention of Kindergarten students.</p> <p><u>Special education</u> students may be graded in accordance with his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP).</p> <p><u>EL Students</u> will be graded consistent with the standard numerical grading scale. EL students may receive accommodations and modifications in accordance to his/her Language Service Plan (LSP).</p>
GRADING SCALE HAWKINS MIDDLE SCHOOL & FOREST HIGH SCHOOL
<p>A standard numerical grading scale is maintained in the Forest Municipal School District. Students will be assigned grades as follows:</p> <p>A = <u>90-100</u> B = <u>80-89</u> C = <u>70-79</u> D = <u>60-69</u> F = <u>59 and below</u></p>
<p><u>Special education</u> students may be graded in accordance with his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP).</p> <p><u>EL Students</u> will be graded consistent with the standard numerical grading scale. They may receive accommodations and modifications in accordance to his/her Language Service Plan (LSP).</p>

GRADING STANDARDS:

All student grades entered by teachers into the grade book and/or the **SAM** database must be directly correlated to the Mississippi Board of Education and School Board approved objectives for that specific course of study. Teachers shall not penalize any student's academic grade average due to a disciplinary action listed in the student handbook unless it is directly related to an offense such as cheating on an academic assignment.

Students who fail to master any required course objective must receive a teacher intervention (MTSS) to assist them with the recovery/mastery of that objective. Upon request, teachers must provide the administrator with written documentation verifying all interventions provided to students receiving less than a 60 average during any 9-week grading period.

Teachers shall utilize a variety of instructional interventions to assist students in mastering all course objectives based on their individual learning needs. In addition, teachers shall encourage students to master all objectives previously failed during the current school term by providing them with opportunities to be reevaluated and receive credit toward achieving a passing grade.

The intent of this policy is for teachers to provide all students with the instructions and interventions necessary for them to master all course objectives based on their individual learning needs.

CHANGING OF GRADES:

1. No school board member, school superintendent, assistant superintendent, principal, guidance counselor, other teachers, coaches, or other administrative staff members of the school or the central staff of a local school board shall attempt, directly or indirectly, to change, alter, or otherwise affect the grade received by a student from his teacher except as otherwise specifically allowed by this section.

2. a. A teacher's determination of a student's grade as a measure of the academic achievement or proficiency of the student shall not be altered or changed in any manner by any school official or employee other than the teacher except as provided in this subsection.

b. A school official or employee having authority provided under formally adopted written rules and procedures adopted by the local school board to change a student's grade can take such action only upon it being determined that the grade is an error or that the grade is demonstrably inconsistent with the teacher's grading policy.

3. Any local school district or personnel employed by the school district who violates the provisions of this act shall cause the local school district or school to be subject to losing its accreditation in the manner determined by the policies and procedures of the State Board of Education (LEGAL REF.: HB 696 (2012); FMSD Policy IHA).

POSTING OF GRADES: Teachers shall consistently enter all student grades on or before 3:30 p.m. on Monday of each week via the **SAM** database so parents can monitor their child's progress via the **Active Parent** website.

Each teacher will be required to administer frequent tests and classroom assignments that are directly related to course objectives. The following standards shall be enforced by principals:

- A minimum of four (4) unit or major tests shall be administered during each nine-week grading period.
- A minimum of two (2) classroom assignments/homework grades are required each week.
- No grades should be posted in the teacher's grade book or on the **SAM** database unless they are directly related to the objectives found in the course framework.
- Teachers shall not withhold or post any student grades as punishment, except for cheating and plagiarism.
- Schools shall issue student progress reports four (4) times per year according to the district calendar.

Note: Since student grades are considered confidential information, teachers shall report all grades to their students in a private manner.

CALCULATING THE NINE WEEK AVERAGE

Forest Elementary School: The nine weeks grade will consist of the average of daily grades at 60%; and weekly unit/chapter test grades at 40%. The semester grade will be the average of the two nine weeks' grades. The two

semester grades will be averaged together to determine the year's cumulative total grade.

Middle School & High School: The nine weeks grade will consist of the average of home and classwork at 25%; weekly test grades at 50%; and the nine weeks test at 25%. The two semester grades will be averaged to determine the year's cumulative total grade. All nine weeks tests shall be comprehensive in format.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Parents/guardians who wish to withdraw their child from school must complete a withdrawal form available in the counselor's office. No student records will be forwarded to the new school until the student completes the withdrawal procedures and returns all textbooks, library books and clears all outstanding fines.

ASSEMBLIES / FIELDTRIPS / EVENTS

ALL FIELD TRIPS must be approved in advance by the superintendent or his/her designee. Overnight trips must be approved in advance by the superintendent. All out-of-state trips must be approved in advance by the superintendent and school board.

1. Principals/Directors must **submit a written request** to the superintendent or his/her designee for all field trips.
2. Staff who wish to attend field trips must have their leave requests approved in advance by the superintendent.
3. Field trips requiring **bus transportation** must have trip tickets approved in advance by the superintendent or his/or designee.
4. A **list of all students/adults** attending the field trip including a copy of the trip's itinerary must be sent to the appropriate teachers and the principal's office in advance.
5. A **Lunchroom Trip Form** requesting meals must be submitted to the Child Nutrition Office in advance.

It is a privilege for students to participate in school activities outside the classroom. Students who fail to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner will not be allowed to attend these activities. All decisions to suspend students' attendance shall be at the discretion of the principal.

Field trips within our city and to nearby points of interest are scheduled by various classroom teachers throughout the school year. These trips are designed to supplement different aspects of the curriculum and to introduce students to the resources of the community and the state. Parents must be notified of all field trips in advance and required to complete a field trip permission form, if applicable.

Students may often be required to pay a fee to defray transportation or admission costs. Field trip fees must be paid in cash and not by check. Field trip fees are non-refundable. Where transportation is involved in such excursions, the parent or guardian must sign a consent form prior to departure. Students attending field trips are required to travel as a group in the same manner. If a school bus is provided, all students must travel on the bus and not with their parent/guardian. Parents are encouraged to attend field trip outings with their children. Students serving a suspension (ISS or OSS) will not be allowed to attend a field trip unless approved otherwise by their principal.

Supervision of students on a school bus: All district staff, including teachers, teacher assistants and bus drivers assigned to a school bus when transporting students to and from school, field trips, or other school sponsored events are responsible for the supervision of all passengers at all times. You must account for all students as they board and exit the bus. A thorough check of the bus from front to back must be conducted each and every time to ensure that no student is inadvertently left onboard.

NOTE: Absolutely no assemblies, field trips, extracurricular activities, or any other student related events will be approved if scheduled on the night before or during any **9 Weeks Exams** or **State-wide testing** dates.

ASBESTOS HAZARD EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACT COMPLIANCE NOTIFICATION

Forest Municipal School District

◆ 325 Cleveland Street ◆ Forest, Mississippi 39074 ◆
◆ Office: (601) 469-3250 ◆ FAX: 601-469-3101 ◆

Teachers/Staff/Parents:

In accordance with AHERA regulations, school districts are required to perform several activities with regards to Asbestos in schools. These activities include an initial asbestos inspection and development of a Management Plan. The Management Plan addresses how identified asbestos containing materials (ACM) will be handled (abated or managed in place).

As part of the Management Plan, schools are also required to provide this notification to all parents, teachers, and employees of our ongoing management of ACM. The Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act of 1987 required all public and private schools to conduct inspections for friable and non-friable asbestos building materials. In addition, this law required each school to develop asbestos management plans that address asbestos hazards in school buildings, implement response actions in a timely fashion and report results of the assessment studies to school employees and parent/teacher organizations.

A copy of the inspection and management plan and all supplementary information is available for inspection at each school, and in the Forest Municipal School District central office located at 325 Cleveland Street, Forest, Mississippi. These documents are available for review at any time. For further information, interested persons should call 601-469-3250.

Respectfully,

Superintendent

DISTRICT CALENDAR

FOREST MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

2025-2026 District Calendar

Board Approved January 9, 2025

July 9-11	Student Registration
July 17-18	New Teacher Induction/Training
July 22-23	Professional Development
July 22	Open House
July 24	First Student Day
August 27	Progress Report Issued #1
August 28	Professional Development (Student Holiday)
August 29	Student/ Teacher Holiday
September 1	Labor Day Holiday
September 29-30	First Nine Weeks Exam
October 1-3	First Nine Weeks Exam
October 3	End of First Nine Weeks
October 6-10	Fall Break
October 13	Professional Development (Student Fall Break)
October 16	Report Card Pickup
November 13	Progress Report Issued #2
November 24-28	Thanksgiving Break
December 12-18	Second Nine Weeks Exam
December 19	63% Day / End of Second Nine Weeks
December 22	First Day of Christmas Break
January 5	Professional Development
January 6	Student Return
January 8	Report Card Pickup
January 19	Martin Luther King
February 12	Progress Report #3
February 16-17	Student / Teacher Holiday
March 2-6	Third Nine Weeks Exams
March 6	End of Third Nine Weeks
March 9-13	Spring Break
March 16	Professional Development
March 19	Report Card Pickup
April 3	Good Friday Holiday
April 6	Easter Holiday / Weather Make up
April 16	Progress Report #4 Issued
May 15-20	Fourth Nine Weeks Exam
May 19	Graduation
May 21	Last Day of School / 63% Day (Students Only)
May 22	Professional Development
May 25	Memorial Day

Note: No activities shall be scheduled beyond 5:30p.m on the night before 9-week exams or state test.

	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Sem.1	Jan	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Sem.2	Year
Student	6	19	21	17	15	15	93	18	18	16	20	15	87	180
Teacher	8	20	21	18	15	15	97	19	18	17	20	16	90	187

CHAIN OF COMMAND / REPORTING STRUCTURE

ALL Teachers → Principal → Superintendent(s) → School Board

SPED Teacher (IEP related actions) → SPED Director → Principal → Superintendent → School Board

Coach (athletic related actions only) → Athletic Director → Principal → Superintendent → School Board

- All principals, directors or other administrators are directly responsible to the Superintendent(s) or designee.
- All teachers, teacher assistants and other school based personnel are directly responsible to their principal.
- All SPED teachers and assistants are directly responsible to the SPED Director for IEP related actions only. The SPED Director may share the responsibility of monitoring and evaluating all special education personnel with the principal.
- All cafeteria personnel are directly responsible to their school's cafeteria manager. All cafeteria managers are directly responsible to the Child Nutrition Director.
- All maintenance and custodial personnel are directly responsible to the Maintenance Director and/or principal.
- All transportation personnel are directly responsible to the Transportation Director.
- All technology personnel are directly responsible to the Technology Coordinator.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Supervision: Teachers/staff are responsible for supervising students at all times. Merely having students in your direct line of sight may not be enough. Teachers/staff must move around their classrooms or work space often and be proactive in paying attention to what his/her students are doing at all times.

Safety: It is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that a safe environment exists in the classroom at all times to protect students. Safety measures should be followed during the presentation of all classroom activities, i.e. experiments, demonstrations, videos, fieldtrips, etc. Safety instructions as related to any potentially hazardous activity must be given to students before any activities begin.

In the event that an accident does occur, teachers must contact the principal and/or school nurse immediately, administer first aid as necessary to prevent further injury, and file a detailed accident report with the office. Should a student become ill in your classroom or while under your supervision, you should notify the principal and school nurse immediately and provide assistance until they arrive. Any dangerous or hazardous conditions should be reported immediately by the teacher so the appropriate corrections can be made.

Principals shall conduct safety drills periodically as required by state and local laws. Emergency procedures for fire, natural disasters, or other emergencies (including evacuation routes) are listed on the emergency procedures sheet supplied by the principal. A copy of the evacuation route diagram must be posted in a conspicuous place in each classroom, and faculty members must familiarize students with all emergency procedures.

Classroom Appearance: Classrooms should be kept neat and orderly at all times. In addition to the janitorial services provided by the district, teachers should do their part to emphasize and enforce classroom cleanliness practices with all students. Desks, furniture, equipment, etc. must be arranged in an orderly fashion to maintain clear aisles for traffic, and to allow the teacher a clear line of vision to all areas of the classroom for the supervision of all students at all times.

Bulletin boards should be arranged neatly and reflect student achievement and subject matter. Materials for bulletin boards or classroom displays can be purchased with EEF funds. Supplies may be available in the work room or office. All class parties must be approved in advance by the principal.

Videos / Movies: No video shall be shown in any FMSD classroom unless it is directly related to the lesson plan and approved by the principal in advance. All videos must be screened in advance for age appropriateness.

Handling of Materials and Equipment: Textbooks, educational materials, and equipment are provided for pupil and

teacher use. These must be properly handled. Students shall be held responsible for any damages to public school property. When not in use, all materials and equipment must be kept in locked storage areas or returned to the place of pickup. Requests for repairs or other needed services must be directed to the principal in writing. Requests for new or replacement textbooks for the following school year must be presented to the Principal in writing prior to the end of the current school term.

Some employees are provided specialized equipment such as laptops, cell phones, and other technology related devices. These items must be secured at all times. Under no circumstances shall any fixed asset item be checked out or removed from its assigned location without written permission from your principal/supervisor. The use of these items for personal non-school related use is strictly forbidden. Employees are personally responsible for the replacement cost if the item is lost, stolen, or damaged while assigned to their care. If an employee is not willing to accept this responsibility, they should return all applicable equipment to their principal/supervisor.

Inventory, Reports, and Record Keeping: Teachers shall be responsible for completing and filing all necessary reports and/or documents, including but not limited to: textbook and equipment inventories, and any other reports assigned by the school administration. Teachers are solely responsible for maintaining an up-to-date inventory at all times of any items assigned to their classroom or work area.

Teachers may be required to assist the school counselor in posting final student grades to the grade sheets, cumulative folders, permanent records, and report cards for the students in grades K-12.

Personal Property: The Forest Municipal School District shall not be responsible for any items of personal property or valuables brought to work. If you must bring personal property to work, it is your responsibility to keep the items in a locked storage or a secured area when not in use. It is not advisable to leave personal property at any school location over extended break periods such as Christmas, Spring Break, etc.

Department Team Meetings: Principals shall require faculty members to meet at regular intervals to discuss issues related to student discipline, grades, or the instructional program. Questions concerning another faculty member's teaching, grading, or other professional activities shall be directed to the principal in private.

CODE OF ETHICS – STANDARDS OF CONDUCT (EDUCATORS)

Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct

Each educator, upon entering the teaching profession, assumes a number of obligations, one of which is to adhere to a set of principles which defines professional conduct. These principles are reflected in the following code of ethics which sets forth to the education profession and the public it serves standards of professional conduct and procedures for implementation.

This code shall apply to all persons licensed according to the rules established by the Mississippi State Board of Education and protects the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators.

Ethical conduct is any conduct which promotes the health, safety, welfare, discipline and morals of students and colleagues.

Unethical conduct is any conduct that impairs the license holder's ability to function in his/her employment position or a pattern of behavior that is detrimental to the health, safety, welfare, discipline, or morals of students and colleagues.

Any educator or administrator license may be revoked or suspended for engaging in unethical conduct relating to an educator/student relationship (Standard 4). Superintendents shall report to the Mississippi Department of Education license holders who engage in unethical conduct relating to an educator/student relationship (Standard 4).

Code of Ethics Standards

Standard 1: Professional Conduct

An educator should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards.

- 1.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Encouraging and supporting colleagues in developing and maintaining high standards
 - b. Respecting fellow educators and participating in the development of a professional teaching environment
 - c. Engaging in a variety of individual and collaborative learning experiences essential to professional development designed to promote student learning
 - d. Providing professional education services in a nondiscriminatory manner
 - e. Maintaining competence regarding skills, knowledge, and dispositions relating to his/her organizational position, subject matter and pedagogical practices
 - f. Maintaining a professional relationship with parents of students and establish appropriate communication related to the welfare of their children
- 1.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Harassment of colleagues
 - b. Misuse or mismanagement of tests or test materials
 - c. Inappropriate language on school grounds or any school-related activity
 - d. Physical altercations
 - e. Failure to provide appropriate supervision of students and reasonable disciplinary actions

Standard 2. Trustworthiness

An educator should exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice and does not knowingly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district or educational institution.

- 2.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Properly representing facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression
 - b. Advocating for fair and equitable opportunities for all children
 - c. Embodying for students the characteristics of honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness.
- 2.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting any of the following:
 1. employment history, professional qualifications, criminal history, certification/recertification
 2. information submitted to local, state, federal, and/or other governmental agencies
 3. information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel
 4. reasons for absences or leave
 5. information submitted in the course of an official inquiry or investigation
 - b. Falsify records or direct or coerce others to do so

Standard 3. Unlawful Acts

An educator shall abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes and local school board policies.

3. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the commission or conviction of a felony or sexual offense. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of *nolo contendere*, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought or situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted.

Standard 4. Educator/Student Relationship

An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom.

- 4.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Fulfilling the roles of mentor and advocate for students in a professional relationship. A professional relationship is one where the educator maintains a position of teacher/student authority while expressing concern, empathy, and encouragement for students
 - b. Nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social and civic potential of all students
 - c. Providing an environment that does not needlessly expose students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement
 - d. Creating, supporting, and maintaining a challenging learning environment for all students
- 4.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to the following:
 - a. Committing any act of child abuse
 - b. Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment
 - c. Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act
 - d. Engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion or disability

- e. Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs
- f. Soliciting, encouraging, participating or initiating inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, physical or romantic relationship with a student.

Examples of these acts may include but not be limited to:

- 1. sexual jokes
- 2. sexual remarks
- 3. sexual kidding or teasing
- 4. sexual innuendo
- 5. pressure for dates or sexual favors
- 6. inappropriate touching, fondling, kissing or grabbing
- 7. rape
- 8. threats of physical harm
- 9. sexual assault
- 10. electronic communication such as texting
- 11. invitation to social networking
- 12. remarks about a student's body
- 13. consensual sex

Standard 5. Educator Collegial Relationships

An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with colleagues, both in and outside the classroom

5. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to the following:

- a. Revealing confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law
- b. Harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system
- c. Interfering with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities
- d. Discriminating against or coercing a colleague on the basis of race, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability or family status
- e. Using coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions of colleagues

Standard 6. Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use or Possession

An educator should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or tobacco during the course of professional practice and should never use illegal or unauthorized drugs

6.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Factually representing the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use and abuse to students during the course of professional practice

6.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Being under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs
- b. Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented as being under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcoholic beverages. A school-related activity includes but is not limited to, any activity that is sponsored by a school or a school system or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum such as club trips, etc. which involve students.
- c. Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented using tobacco.

Standard 7. Public Funds and Property

An educator shall not knowingly misappropriate, divert, or use funds, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

7.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Maximizing the positive effect of school funds through judicious use of said funds
- b. Modeling for students and colleagues the responsible use of public property

7.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. Knowingly misappropriating, diverting or using funds, personnel, property or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain
- b. Failing to account for funds collected from students, parents or any school-related function
- c. Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay

- d. Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts
- e. Using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing body

Standard 8. Remunerative Conduct

An educator should maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation.

- 8.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Insuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain
 - b. Insuring that school policies or procedures are not impacted by gifts or gratuities from any person or organization
- 8.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Soliciting students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local governing body.
 - b. Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local school board
 - c. The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. *(This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service)*

Standard 9. Maintenance of Confidentiality

An educator shall comply with state and federal laws and local school board policies relating to confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material, and other information covered by confidentiality agreements.

- 9.1. Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Keeping in confidence information about students that has been obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves a legitimate purpose or is required by law
 - b. Maintaining diligently the security of standardized test supplies and resources
- 9.2. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Sharing confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information family status/income and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law.
 - b. Violating confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, and violating local school board or state directions for the use of tests
 - c. Violating other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy

Standard 10. Breach of Contract or Abandonment of Employment

An educator should fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local school board or educational agency for the duration of the contract.

- 10. Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the school board.
 - b. Refusing to perform services required by the contract.

DRESS CODE AND STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONALISM (FACULTY / STAFF)

Faculty / Staff Professionalism: Your impact on students, faculty, parents and the community is very important. As a professional educator, it is essential that your attitude, demeanor, statements, remarks, appearance, and general conduct be reflective of your professional status. Always speak kindly of your students and staff to members of the community. The use of profanity, gossiping, etc. is strictly prohibited. Teachers are role models for students and must always exhibit a positive image in their presence.

Dress Code: All district employees are expected to be well groomed and dress in a manner to reflect credit upon themselves and the teaching profession. All employees are required to adhere to the following professional dress code:

Faculty and staff are required to dress professionally according to the same or higher standards as required of our students. NO EXCEPTIONS!

The following is a list of clothing items NOT allowed, or allowed with exceptions:

- Jeans (Except on limited occasions such as field trips if approved in advance by the principal)
- Shorts above the knee
- Sportswear (jogging suits, yoga pants, sweat pants, tights, wind suits, leggings, or lounge suits)
- Halter style tops or sun dresses -- Revealing clothing should always be avoided.
- Flip-flop (shower style) shoes
- Dressy leggings are allowed only if a top/dress is worn over them that covers at least to mid-thigh.
- Dresses and skirts should be an appropriate length (as determined by the principal).

All personnel are required to dress in an appropriate manner at the discretion of the principal.

DRUG / TOBACCO / WEAPON FREE ENVIRONMENT

The Forest Municipal School District has been designated as a drug free school zone pursuant to all federal and state guidelines. Drug screening is a pre-condition for participation in extra-curricular activities and for driving and parking a privately-owned vehicle on campus.

Mississippi Code 37-11-18 states that any student in any school who possesses any controlled substance in violation of the Uniform Controlled Substances Law, a knife, handgun, other firearm or any other instrument considered to be dangerous and capable of causing bodily harm or who commits a violent act on educational property as defined in Section 97-37-17, Mississippi Code of 1972, shall be subject to automatic expulsion for a calendar year by the Superintendent or Principal of the school in which the student is enrolled. Such expulsion shall take effect immediately subject to the constitutional rights of due process, which shall include the student's right to appeal to the local school board.

PROHIBITION OF WEAPONS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY (Mississippi Code 97-37-17)

The following definitions apply to this section:

- “Educational property” shall mean any public or private school building or bus, public or private school campus, grounds, recreational area, athletic field, or other property owned, bused, or operated by any local school board, school, college, or university board of trustees or directors for the administration of any public or private educational institution or during a school related activity; provided however, that the term “educational property” shall not include any sixteenth section school land or lieu land on which is not located a school building, school campus, recreational area, or athletic field.
- “Student” shall mean a person enrolled in a public or private school, college, or university, or a person who has been suspended or expelled within the last five (5) years from a public or private school, college or university, whether the person is an adult or a minor.
- “Switchblade knife” shall mean a knife containing a blade or blades which open automatically by the release of a spring or a similar contrivance.
- “Weapon” shall mean any device enumerated in subsection (2) or (4) of this section.

It shall be a felony for any person to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed, any gun, rifle, pistol, or other firearm of any kind, or any dynamite cartridge, bomb, grenade, mine, or powerful explosive on educational property. However, this subsection does not apply to a BB gun, air rifle, or air pistol.

Any person violating this subsection shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00), or committed to the custody of the State Department of Corrections for not more than three (3) years, or both.

It shall be a felony for any person to cause, encourage or aid a minor who is less than eighteen (18) years old to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed, any gun, rifle, pistol, or other firearm of any kind, or any dynamite cartridge, bomb, grenade, mine or powerful explosive on educational property. However, this subsection does not apply to a BB gun, air rifle or air pistol. Any person violating this subsection shall be guilty of a felony and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00), or committed to the custody of the State Department of Corrections for not more than three (3) years, or both.

It shall be a misdemeanor for any person to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed any BB gun, air rifle, air pistol, Bowie knife, dirk, dagger, slingshot, leaded cane, switchblade knife, blackjack, metallic knuckles, razors and razor blades (except solely for personal shaving), and any sharp-pointed or edged instrument except instructional supplies, unaltered nail files and clips and tools used solely for the preparation of food, instruction and maintenance on educational property. Any person violating this subsection shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00), or be imprisoned not exceeding six months, or both.

It shall be a misdemeanor for any person to cause, encourage or aid a minor who is less than eighteen (18) years old to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed, any BB gun, air rifle, air pistol, Bowie knife, dirk, dagger,

slingshot, leaded cane, switchblade knife, blackjack, metallic knuckles, razors and razor blades, (except solely for personal shaving), and any sharp-pointed or edged instrument except instructional supplies, unaltered nail files and clips and tools used solely for the preparation of food, instruction and maintenance on educational property. Any person violating this subsection shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00), or be imprisoned not exceeding six months, or both.

It shall not be a violation of this section for any person to possess or carry, whether openly or concealed, any gun, rifle, pistol, or other firearm of any kind on educational property if:

- a. The person is not a student attending school on the educational property;
- b. The firearm is within a motor vehicle; and
- c. The person does not brandish, exhibit or display the firearm in any careless, angry or threatening manner.

This section shall apply to:

- a. A weapon used solely for educational or school-sanctioned ceremonial purposes, or used in a school-approved program conducted under the supervision of an adult whose supervision has been approved by the school authority;
- b. Armed forces personnel of the United States, officers and soldiers of the militia and National Guard, law enforcement personnel, any private police employed by an educational institution, State Militia or emergency Management Corps and any guard or Patrolman in a state or municipal institution, when acting in the discharge of their official duties;
- c. Home schools as defined in the compulsory school attendance law, Section 37-13-91, Mississippi Code of 1972;
- d. Competitors while participating in organized shooting events;
- e. Any person as authorized in Section 97-37-7 while in performance of his/her official duties;
- f. Any mail carrier while in the performance of his official duties; or
- g. Any weapon not prescribed by Section 97-37-7 which is in a motor Vehicle under the control of a parent or custodian, as defined in Section 43-21-105, which is used to bring or pick up a student at a school building, school property or school function;

All schools shall post in public view a copy of the provisions of this section.

DRUG / ALCOHOL TESTING: Drug and alcohol testing is federally mandated for all transportation employees. However, all employees employed by the FMSD are subject to being randomly tested for drugs or alcohol. In addition, if reasonable suspicion exists that any FMSD employee is working under the influence of drugs or alcohol, he/she shall be subject to a mandatory test.

TOBACCO FREE/VAPING FREE CAMPUS: The Forest Municipal School District shall follow policy in accordance with GEPA 442(b) and Section 14306(a):

No use of tobacco or vape shall be permitted on any property owned or leased or contracted for and utilized by any person for the provision of routine or regular kindergarten, elementary, or secondary education or library services to children (Section 1043a).

EMERGENCY DRILLS AND PROCEDURES

In accordance with FMSD School Board Policy AFC (Authority for Emergency Closings), the Superintendent is authorized to suspend operations of the schools for a day or a part of a day because of severe weather conditions. Procedures to be followed in the event of an emergency are posted in each classroom. Periodic drills will be conducted throughout the year to familiarize students with the procedures. To insure personal safety, all individuals will remain silent throughout emergency procedures. Instructions for emergency drills are as follows:

FIRE DRILL: In the event of a FIRE or other emergency requiring the evacuation of any school building, the procedures listed below shall be followed.

1. A verbal command will be used to signal the Fire drill.
2. Students will exit the building in the direction indicated on the evacuation chart posted in each classroom if possible, or by the nearest alternate route.
3. Students will leave all property in the room and exit quietly, quickly, and carefully.
4. Each teacher with classroom roll book in hand will direct students to a designated safe area away from the building. Be careful not to block roads or fire hydrants which emergency vehicles may have to use.
5. Students will remain with their teacher in the designated safe area until the all clear signal is sounded by the principal or designee.

TORNADO DRILL: In the event of a TORNADO, the procedures listed below will be followed.

1. A verbal command will be used to signal the Tornado drill.
2. Each teacher with roll book in hand will direct students into the hall or other designated area, except buildings with glass doors in hallways.
3. Students will sit on the floor by the wall, placing their heads between their knees.
4. Students will remain with their teacher in the hall/classroom until the all clear (one long ring) is sounded or until instructed otherwise by the principal or designee.
 - Students in classrooms which open on the sidewalk will move to the wall most distant from the windows and follow the procedures listed above.
 - All emergency procedures will be reviewed with students during the first week of school and regularly thereafter. Emergency drills will be conducted monthly.

EARTHQUAKE DRILL: In the event of an earthquake, the procedures listed below will be followed.

1. A verbal command will be used to signal the Earthquake.
2. During a tremor, get under a secure table or desk.
3. After the tremor stops, listen for evacuation instructions.

LOCK-DOWN & ACTIVE SHOOTER DRILLS (SCHOOL SITE): A verbal command will be used to signal the LOCK-DOWN.

The plan will be implemented immediately should any situation threaten to endanger the lives of students or staff. The Central Office should be notified immediately of any potential threat or danger, so school administrators can be directed to immediately employ the plan.

NOTE: Due to issues of safety and security, parents/guardians are strongly discouraged from picking up their children during an emergency alert. Parents/guardians WILL NOT be allowed to check out any student during a LOCK-DOWN.

EMPLOYMENT TERMINATION / NON-RENEWAL / REASSIGNMENT

CERTIFIED PERSONNEL

Teacher Request: A teacher who wishes to be released from his/her contract during the school year must inform his/her immediate supervisor in writing at least thirty (30) days prior to such termination. Release will be granted upon approval of the Superintendent of Education and the Board of Education.

District Initiated Termination: Section 37-9-59 of the Mississippi Code of 1972 and/or other applicable statutes shall be used as the basis for any termination initiated by the district during the course of a faculty member's contract.

Non-Renewal: The School Employment Procedures Act of 1977, Mississippi Code 37-9-101 et seq. Amended 1977, shall serve as a guide for any non-renewal procedures.

Reductions in Certified Staff: Reductions in Certified Staff will be accomplished according to district policy GBKAR. No staff vacancy shall be filled until each displaced staff member who is qualified and licensed for the position has had an opportunity to fill the vacancy or has failed to accept an offer.

Staff Reassignment: The superintendent of schools or designee shall have the authority to make assignments to the various schools in the district of all noninstructional and nonlicensed employees and all licensed employees, as provided in Sections 37-9-15 and 37-9-17, and to make reassignments of such employees from time to time; however, a reassignment of a licensed employee may only be to an area in which the employee has a valid license issued by the State Department of Education. Upon request from any employee transferred, such assignment shall be subject to review by the school board.

CLASSIFIED NON-INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL

Termination: Classified non-instructional personnel are "at-will" employees whose duties do not require a certificate (or license) issued by the State Department of Education. Classified employees have no property rights in their employment, which may be terminated without notice at any time by either the employee or the employer. Reference: School Board Policy, GC (10/9/2023).

Staff Reassignment: The superintendent of schools or designee shall have the authority to make assignments to the various schools in the district of all noninstructional and nonlicensed employees and all licensed employees, as provided in Sections 37-9-15 and 37-9-17, and to make reassignments of such employees from time to time; however, a reassignment of a licensed employee may only be to an area in which the employee has a valid license issued by the State Department of Education. Upon request from any employee transferred, such assignment shall be subject to review by the school board.

EVALUATION / PERSONNEL APPRAISAL (CERTIFIED AND NON-CERTIFIED)

Evaluation of Professional Employees: The evaluation of professional employees shall be in the form and manner prescribed by the Mississippi Department of Education. The school board of this district directs the superintendent to formulate and implement a formal annual performance appraisal system based on job descriptions and on-the-job performance of every professional employee.

According to the form and manner prescribed by the Mississippi Department of Education, the Forest Municipal School District Board of Trustees approved the use of the Mississippi Educator and Administrator Professional Growth System (PGS) to evaluate teachers, librarians, counselors, speech-language pathologists and administrators at all schools (Board Policy GBI).

Certified personnel will receive a formal evaluation at least once per year by their principal/supervisor. Informal (walk-in or spot check) evaluations will be conducted throughout the school year. Administrators will conduct a post-observation conference with personnel to discuss evaluation findings.

Teachers will be provided an electronic copy of their formal evaluation through School Status following the post observation meeting. Appeals of findings or comments in evaluations are handled in the same manner as other grievances. It is the responsibility of the school district to provide opportunities for remediation of deficiencies noted. It is the responsibility of the staff member to follow through with corrective action for consistent, lasting improvement.

Non-Certified Personnel: Non-certified personnel will be evaluated at least once per year by the appropriate principal/supervisor. Informal (walk-in or spot check) evaluations will be conducted throughout the school year.

Types of Evaluations: Evaluations for all district personnel will utilize one or more of the following methods:

1. Announced
2. Unannounced
3. Spot Checks

Both announced and unannounced formal evaluations will be recorded on the appropriate evaluation form. Informal evaluations of performance are of limited scope, generally confined to verifying the presence or absence of certain competencies and behaviors. In any case, observations which indicate areas of needed improvement in performance will result in written notice being given to the employee. Such notice will include a description of the observed deficiency(s) and may include a recommendation for a plan of correction/improvement.

Principals/supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all required evaluations are completed in accordance with the Mississippi Department of Education and local school board policies. All personnel evaluations will be handled with absolute confidentiality. Evaluation records will be maintained in locked file cabinets, with only the principals/supervisors/personnel director having access.

The **SPED Director** may share the responsibility of monitoring and evaluating all special education personnel with the building principal.

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS POLICY (Policy Code: GCRAA)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Forest Municipal School District is in compliance with requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), 29 U.S.C. '201 *et seq.*

EXEMPT EMPLOYEES

Certain employees are exempt from coverage of the FLSA and are not subject to compensation for overtime work. Exempt employees include executive, administrative and professional employees. Examples include, but are not limited to, certified professional employees such as teachers, counselors, supervisors and administrators. Certain non-certified administrators are also exempt and include business managers, transportation directors, maintenance directors and other similar administrative and supervisory positions. Supervisors should seek advice from the school board attorney if there is a question whether a position is exempt.

COVERED EMPLOYEES

Employees in the job classifications listed below are generally considered to be non-exempt and are covered by the FLSA unless a specific exemption exists. In those instances the reasons for the exempt status will be specifically outlined.

- Secretaries
- Bookkeepers
- Clerks
- Mechanics
- Janitors
- Cafeteria Personnel
- Assistant Teachers
- Substitute Teachers
- Bus Drivers
- Maintenance Personnel
- Security
- Data Entry Operators

In some instances employees may perform dual jobs for the District, such as bus driver/maintenance worker. If duties of the two jobs require the employee to work overtime, the amount due will be calculated using the method described below under OVERTIME PAY.

EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIPS

No employment relationship is created between student teachers or students and the District due to circumstances surrounding their activities.

No employment relationship is created between the District and individuals who volunteer and donate their services to the District as a public service without contemplation of pay. The hiring of off-duty policemen or deputies on a part time basis by the District for crowd control or for security purposes does not create a joint employment relationship between the District and the city or county with which the policeman or deputies are employed. The District is separate and distinct and acts entirely independent of other governmental entities.

HOURS WORKED

The work week for the Forest Municipal School District begins at 12:01 a.m. on Saturday and ends at 12:00 midnight on the Friday following. Each employee subject to FLSA shall be paid for all hours worked. Compensable time includes all time an employee is required to be on duty. Coffee breaks, waiting time, and meal periods, which are frequently interrupted by calls to duty, are hours worked and are compensable.

Hours worked shall be accurately recorded by each employee on the monthly or weekly time sheet in the form which is provided by the District. Employees using time sheets shall furnish all information requested and shall record the exact time of arrival and departure from work. Employees are expected to arrive and depart at the time specified by his/her immediate supervisor. All overtime shall be recorded by each employee on the time sheet or time card.

No overtime shall be worked without prior written permission by an immediate supervisor/superintendent. In the event of emergencies requiring work in excess of 40 hours in a work week, the employee shall inform his/her supervisor as soon as practicable regarding the overtime worked.

On call will not be counted as work time if the employee is only required to give is/her schedule so that he/she may be reached if needed and not required to remain in a definite location.

BREAKS AND MEAL PERIODS

Although not required by the FLSA, employees should be allowed coffee breaks of no more than 15 minutes when appropriate. The time of day for breaks and their lengths shall be determined by each employee's immediate supervisor.

Meal periods for some employees shall be counted as hours worked since they are frequently interrupted by calls to duty and therefore are compensable. Those employees with bona fide meal periods of 30 minutes or more shall be completely relieved of duty for the purpose of eating a regular meal and shall not be required to perform any work during that meal period.

MINIMUM WAGE

All employees subject to the FLSA shall be paid not less than the current minimum wage.

OVERTIME PAY

It is the policy of the District that compensation for overtime work will be paid in the form of compensatory time off. Compensatory time shall be awarded on the basis of 1.5 hours for each hour of overtime worked. An employee will not be permitted to accumulate more than 240 compensatory time hours (160 regular hours). Employee must take the compensatory time when it is agreeable with his/her supervisor. However, the supervisor's consent shall not be unreasonably withheld.

In the event the District decides to pay for the overtime work in the form of monetary remuneration, the employee shall be paid not less than 1.5 times his/her regular rate of pay for all hours worked over 40 hours in a work week. Overtime pay due an employee shall be computed on the basis of hours worked in each work week.

For employees paid on an hourly rate, the overtime will be based on that hourly rate. For employees paid on a salaried basis, the monthly salary will be reduced to its weekly hourly rate, from which overtime compensated will be calculated. Employees shall be paid for each and every hour worked. For those employees working 2 or more jobs for the District, overtime pay shall be calculated on the basis of a blended hourly rate on all jobs worked calculated by dividing the total amount of remuneration received in a work week by the total hours worked in that work week. The employee shall be paid one-half of the blended hourly rate times the number of hours worked over 40.

ADJUSTMENT OF SCHEDULES

Supervisors may adjust schedules within a work week to prevent the necessity of an employee working more than 40 hours in that work week.

RECORD KEEPING

Superintendent shall require all records on wages, hours and other items to be maintained in accordance with the FLSA. Wage and Hour poster shall be displayed at each District worksite.

ENFORCEMENT

District shall, at all times, cooperate with authorized representatives of the Department of Labor who may visit a work site. If an employee believes he/she has not been paid in accordance with the FLSA, the employee shall notify his/her supervisor and the Superintendent. Employees who believe they have not been paid in accordance with the FLSA may file a complaint with the United States Department of Labor. The District shall not retaliate in any manner whatsoever against an employee for the filing of such complaints.

District employees responsible for supervising employees subject to the FLSA who willfully violate the terms of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action by the District. Any disciplinary action taken by the District will be in addition to any relief granted an employee by the U.S. Department of Labor or a court of law.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), 29 U.S.C. '201 et seq.

CROSS REFERENCE: Policy GCD – Classified Personnel Hiring

FAMILY RIGHTS TO PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

All student records are to be handled in accordance with the Family Rights and Privacy Act. Anyone accessing student files must complete the insert checkout forms indicating name of person using file, purpose, and date. Only authorized persons may have access to student records. All student information should be kept confidential. This includes both written and oral communications. Teachers should never discuss confidential information pertaining to individual students with anyone unless it is directly related to school business, or otherwise authorized by the principal. A copy of all testing information will be maintained in the student's permanent record in the appropriated principal's office or counselor's office.

Listed below parents will find their rights under the Family Rights to Privacy Act (Public Law 93-380), commonly known as FERPA.

Major Provisions: The FERPA or Buckley Amendment gives parents of students under the age of 18 and over, the right to examine records kept in the student's file.

- Parents and eligible students have the right to review and copy their child's educational records or their own records.
- Parents and eligible students have the right to have records explained and interpreted by school officials.
- School officials may not destroy any records if there is an outstanding request to inspect them.
- Parents and eligible students who believe information contained in the educational records is inaccurate, misleading, or a violation of any rights of the student may request that records be changed.

Hearings: If the school decides that the records should not be changed, the parent of the eligible student must be advised of his/her right to a hearing. The hearing is:

- To be held within reasonable period of time, with the parent or eligible student given advance notice of the date, place, and time.
- To be conducted by a party who does not have a direct interest in the outcome of the hearing.
- At the hearing, the parent or eligible student has the right to present evidence and be represented by individuals of his/her choice.
- The decision of the hearing is to be in writing, and the decision can be based only on the evidence presented at the hearing.

Records: A school may release certain kinds of educational records to education and other social service agencies without permission from the parent or eligible student. A record containing information regarding requests for records must be maintained with the student's files. This information can be inspected by the parent or eligible student.

NOTE: Each school district or institution must give parents of students in attendance or students age 18 or over, an annual notice to inform them of:

- School or institution policy or procedures in providing the rights and protection of PL 93-380.
- The right of the parents and students age 18 and over to file a complaint if the institution fails to comply with the requirements of the law including the right to have the law communicated to the student or parent in a primary language other than English.

GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS – LICENSED STAFF (Policy Code: GAE-R)

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of these procedures is to secure, at the earliest time and at the lowest possible administrative level, equitable solutions to problems which, from time to time, may arise and which affect the welfare or working conditions of employees of the district. These procedures are adopted to establish and implement compliance with Forest School Board Policy GAE, STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES, heretofore adopted; to schedule the prompt resolution of grievances; to establish the procedures for appeal; due process and notification of conference and/or hearings on review and the schedule and timing of such review; and, to require the rendition of relative decisions.

2. PROCEDURES

Grievances shall be processed as rapidly as possible at every level. The number of days indicated in which a resolution of a grievance is to be attempted should be considered as maximum. Time limits specified may be extended by agreement of the employee and the administration. Time limits may be reduced by the administration when the grievance shall have been filed so late in the school year as to jeopardize the resolution of the grievance before the end of that school year. In the event of a proposed reduction in time, the administration shall notify the employee in writing of said reduction within three (3) days of receipt of the grievance. In no event shall such reduction of time preclude a deliberate consideration of the grievance and its resolution.

3. DEFINITIONS

A. The word "Principal" as used herein shall mean the administrative person assigned and responsible for the activity upon the individual school campus at which an employee is principally employed. The word "Supervisor" shall mean the administrative person assigned and responsible for the conduct of separate school facility and operation, i.e.: Food Service, Maintenance or Transportation. "Immediate Supervisor" shall mean department head of academic instruction or athletics (when the grievance relates purely to assignment of the employee in athletic instruction); or, foreman of work upon which employed, if there is such.

B. "Employee", as used herein, shall mean an employee; or, more than one employee in a group of employees similarly situated; which definition shall apply at all levels of consideration of the grievance.

C. "Presentation of a grievance", as used herein, shall mean an oral or a written request for Level One conference; or, the written request for a conference at the next level, a hearing or any appeal.

D. In determining time limitations, the word "Day" shall mean a day on which school is in session.

E. The use of the term of the male gender herein shall include those persons of the female gender.

F. The phrases "Request for Level Two...(or, Three)... Consideration" and "Appeal" shall be considered synonymous in interpretation of procedure as appropriate.

4. LEVEL ONE PROCEEDINGS

Grievance of a decision made by the administration shall be first presented to the immediate supervisor of the employee who feels aggrieved. In the event the immediate supervisor of that employee is not the principal/supervisor of the campus or facility at which the employee is principally employed, the matter shall be taken; unless there resolved, but no later than the next day; to the principal/supervisor for consideration and resolution. An initial conference shall be held between the employee and the principal/supervisor to determine if the grievance can be resolved between them and without formality. Any grievance unresolved upon initial conference with a principal/supervisor, and which is not then in writing, shall be reduced to writing by the employee within the five days next succeeding the initial conference with the principal/supervisor and shall be included as a part of the record of the proceedings to that date. If the grievance is not then mutually resolved, the rationale for the decision not to reverse the action about which grievance is made shall be reduced to writing and given to the employee by said principal/supervisor within seven (7) days of initial presentation of the grievance to the principal/Supervisor. All proceedings herein above described with the immediate supervisor and/or Principal/supervisor are designated Level One proceedings. If the employee has not filed a Request for Level Two Consideration with the principal/supervisor within ten (10) days after his receipt of copy of decision by the principal/supervisor, the dispute shall be considered resolved.

5. REQUEST FOR LEVEL TWO PROCEEDINGS

An employee who shall consider his grievance unresolved may file request for Level Two Consideration in writing with his principal/supervisor within ten (10) days of receipt of copy of the decision in Level One proceedings. The request shall contain a statement of the basis of dispute about which consideration or reconsideration is requested; and, shall be signed and dated by the employee and/or employees.

Upon receipt of such request, the record of the Level One proceedings; to include the original decision, the written grievance and all requests for reconsideration and/or appeal and a statement of the rationale for the issue of the decision and the denial of the grievance, all in writing; shall be compiled by the principal/supervisor; and, as the record of such proceedings, delivered to the Superintendent of the District, within the three (3) days next succeeding receipt of the request from the employee.

6. LEVEL TWO PROCEEDINGS

A. All requests for Level Two Proceedings shall be received by the superintendent and resolved as a reconsideration of Level One proceedings. Those persons employed by the district who report directly to; or, whose employment is supervised directly by the superintendent may file request for reconsideration of order, assignment, requirement or administrative direction with the superintendent. The superintendent shall act on such a request within the same time limitations as herein above established for Level One proceedings.

B. The superintendent shall meet with the employee filing request within ten (10) days after the filing of the request. A full discussion of the original decision of which complaint is made; the rationale for it; and, the factors and facts upon which the employee bases his grievance shall be entertained by the Superintendent in his consideration. The superintendent may, but is not required to do so at that time, permit the introduction of testimony of others in support of the administrative decision and/or the employee's grievance. All proceedings at Level Two shall be conducted in the presence of the employee.

C. The superintendent shall render and deliver his decision in writing to the employee within ten (10) days after the employee conference at Level Two. If the superintendent does not render and deliver his decision within ten (10) days after the conference, the employee may appeal the earlier Level One decision and the lack of Superintendent's decision in Level Two proceedings. An unresolved grievance filed by the employee whose activity is supervised directly by the Superintendent may be appealed to Level Three Hearing as in the case of Level One action considered or unresolved at Level Two by the Superintendent.

D. Appeal for Level Three Hearing shall be filed in writing by the employee in the office of the superintendent within ten (10) days after decision was, or, should have been, rendered by the superintendent. If the action taken at Level Two is not appealed by the employee within the ten (10) day period of time, the grievance shall be considered resolved.

7. LEVEL THREE HEARING

Level Three Hearings shall be conducted in accord with the provisions and principles in Forest School Board Policy GBN-R, RULES OF PROCEDURE UNDER SCHOOL EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES ACT, heretofore adopted by Board.

8. RESOLUTION CONFERENCES AND APPEALS

Conferences and appeals at all levels shall:

- a. be conducted by the principal/supervisor of the campus/facility at which the employee feeling aggrieved is principally employed; or, the superintendent; or, designee of the board or hearing officer, as appropriate.
- b. include as party participant the employee and any other staff member personally involved; and, when the grievance is of directive issued by principal/supervisor, shall include the principal/supervisor at Level Two proceedings. Should the employee desire representation at conference, such shall be permitted upon notification to the administrator conducting the conference at least two (2) days in advance of such conference; and then, only at the private employment and expense of the employee.
- c. be held only after due written notification to all persons concerned. Waiver of time requirements shall be reduced to writing and signed by the administrator and the employee(s) involved.
- d. be free from interferences, coercion, restraint, discrimination or reprisal.
- e. be held in private at conference level, unless request otherwise shall be first obtained from the employee(s).
- f. be limited to the ascertainment of relative facts and the obtaining of statement(s) relative and pertinent to the initiation of grievance; but, conducted in such manner as will allow the administrator, the employee or his representative to clarify such matters presented as fact or statements made at the conference. Cross-examination as such shall not be conducted as part of any conference.
- g. be made of record to consist of the original decision or directive; the grievance of the employee; the action of the administrator upon said grievance; copies of all notices and writings; written, or tape recorded, summary of the conference; and, a written statement of the rationale for the decision of the administrator in accepting or rejecting the grievance of the employee.
- h. fully and freely develop the dispute which gave rise to the filing of the grievance; but, not to be unduly protracted in time.

HOMELESS STUDENTS & FOSTER CARE

District Point of Contact: Reagan Shoemaker (Statement of non-bias equitable services to homeless children)

The Forest Municipal School District provides for students who are temporarily displaced (Homeless) or in Foster Care. The district also has a philosophy that ensures all children have equal access to the same public pre-school programs as provided for non-homeless or foster children.

HOMEWORK & OTHER ASSIGNMENTS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Homework and other assignments outside the classroom should only be assigned to review and strengthen those skills that were previously taught. If homework or other work is assigned, the teacher must thoroughly explain the directions in advance, and provide the student with all information necessary to complete the assignment. Homework assignments should vary with the age and grade of students and never be excessive. Teachers must check homework when the assignment is made.

IDENTIFICATION OF FACULTY, STAFF, AND VISITORS

All district personnel must wear identification tags while working on campus. All visitors will report to the office to receive an Identification Tag or a Visitor's Pass. Any visitor seen on campus without proper identification should be reported to the school office immediately.

INSTRUCTIONAL DUTIES / ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL SCHEDULES

During School Hours: Each principal shall assign all members of the faculty and staff under their direct supervision to specific supervisory duties during the school day, such as bus duty, hall duty, cafeteria duty, recess, etc. All faculty members are required to be at their classroom door to supervise the hall, bathroom, and classroom areas immediately before and after school and during each class change, unless instructed otherwise by the principal.

Teachers are required to monitor student activities at all times both inside and outside the classroom. Under no circumstances should the teacher ever leave the classroom or duty area unsupervised. If an emergency situation arises and you must leave your class, it is your responsibility to contact the nearest faculty member to your room, or contact the office via the intercom/telephone so that supervision can be arranged.

After School Hours: All Forest Municipal School District employees shall be admitted free of charge to all regularly scheduled home games when they present a valid employee ID. All certified faculty members may be assigned to serve additional duties at athletic events or other school sponsored functions during the school year.

Extra-Curricular Activities: Forest Municipal School District offers a wide variety of activities to students. Included among these activities are clubs and organizations. Faculty members assigned as sponsors of these clubs and organizations are responsible for the proper conduct of students during all club or organization activities.

Each faculty member may be required to serve as a classroom sponsor and/or homeroom sponsor for the class/grade to which he/she is assigned. The purpose of the classroom sponsor is to assist in coordinating student activities. A list of all class sponsors and sponsors for school-sponsored clubs and activities is available in each principal's office.

Duty Hours: Teachers are expected to be on duty at their respective schools no later than 7:15 a.m. or 7:30 a.m. each day depending on the campus. Except when carrying out other assignments authorized by the principal, teachers are expected to remain at school or on duty during designated work hours. It is expected that all teachers remain at their designated school site as follows and until buses exit, unless directed otherwise by their principal:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday	Wednesday
3:30 p.m.All Schools	4:00 p.m. +/- (Only when faculty meetings are scheduled)
Administrative school staff are expected to arrive by 7:00 a.m. and depart at 4:00 p.m. unless designated otherwise by their supervisor. All faculty and staff are required to clock-in and clock-out at the designated area.	

Faculty Meetings: Faculty meetings will generally be held on Wednesdays as needed. However, administrators may occasionally find it necessary to schedule faculty meetings at other times. Unless specifically released by the principal, all certified faculty members are required to attend each meeting. Occasionally, teacher assistants and/or other designated personnel may be required to attend certain meetings.

Teaching Assignment: Specific teaching assignments will be made by the appropriate school principal. Assignments are subject to change upon recommendation by the principal and/or superintendent. Final approval shall be made by the superintendent. No teacher shall be required to perform any teaching assignment which exceeds the provisions of the Mississippi State Department of Education Commission of School Accreditation or other applicable provisions or regulations. Any questions regarding teaching assignments or duties associated with the position should be directed to the appropriate school principal and/or director.

Supervision of students on a school bus: All district staff, including teachers, teacher assistants and bus drivers assigned to a school bus when transporting students to and from school, field trips, or other school sponsored events are responsible for the supervision of all passengers at all times. You must account for all students as they board and exit the bus. A thorough check of the bus from front to back must be conducted each and every time so no student is inadvertently left behind.

Lesson Plans: All teachers, including electives teachers are required to prepare and submit detailed lesson plans for all subjects taught to their principal each week using the district approved lesson plan template. Only the principal and/or the assistant principal are authorized to check lesson plans each week and provide teachers with appropriate feedback. Teachers must also provide detailed lesson plans for substitute teachers or for purposes of administrative observations as directed. All faculty members should have on file several all-purpose lesson plans to be used for emergency situations. Lesson planning or any other form of planning must be completed during a planning period or other appropriate time when students are not present in the classroom. Any deviation from the lesson plan format must be approved by the superintendent.

Instruction: Teachers should employ a variety of methods to present lesson objectives so students with different learning styles and abilities will have an equal opportunity for success. Classroom instruction should always follow the MDE curriculum framework and be designed to meet the needs of each individual student. Specific content and/or materials contained in a course may be modified by the instructor to meet changing needs. Any major changes should be approved by the principal.

A variety of services are available for special education and intellectually gifted students. Special Education instruction must be carefully aligned to the College and Career Readiness Standards and each student's individual IEP. All teachers who teach special education students must have a copy of their **Individualized Education Program (IEP) on file**. Gifted classes are available for students who qualify. Teachers should make all recommendations for student assessment to their principal or his/her designee.

Preparation: Teachers are expected to report to the classroom each and every day fully prepared for their teaching assignment. Adequate preparation is essential to maintaining an effective teaching and learning process, and classroom management. Any materials and/or equipment needed to assist in lesson preparation may be secured through the principal's office, library, or from other faculty members. Copy machines may be used only when lesson items cannot be duplicated by other means. Copyrighted materials should not be duplicated without permission.

Promotion and Grading Standards for Special Education Students: Promotion of special education students is consistent with the district's grading policy for all students. Any student who is resourced (placed in a regular classroom) for part of the school day will receive grades like any other student attending that class. Self-contained students are graded based upon alternate standards as prescribed in their IEP.

Student Motivation and Counseling: Good rapport and positive communication with students is vital to classroom success. Taking the time to understand and practice fairness and consistency with all students are key to developing good rapport and mutual respect between students and teachers. Teachers should be ever mindful of these qualities and strive daily to positively counsel and motivate all students. Students requiring special counseling services should be referred to the school counselor or principal. Social Counselors may also be available to assist with counseling needs upon request.

INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (Staff/Teacher)

Forest Municipal School District (FMSD) is pleased to offer to its students, faculty, and staff access to the FMSD network in accordance with the terms and conditions of this policy. The FMSD network provides access to district resources as well as the Internet. This computer technology will help propel our schools through the communication age by allowing students and staff to access and to use resources from distant computers, communicate and collaborate with other individuals and groups, and significantly expand their available information base.

Overview

In order to qualify for federal and state funds such as E-Rate discounts and Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the FMSD must be in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA).

COPPA

The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, effective April 21, 2000, applies to the online collection of personal information from children under thirteen years of age. The rules spell out what a Web site operator must include in a

privacy policy, when and how to seek verifiable consent from a parent, and what responsibilities an operator has to protect children's privacy and safety online.

CIPA

The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) is a federal law enacted by Congress in December, 2000 to address concerns about access in schools and libraries to the Internet and other information. Among many other things, it calls for schools and libraries to have in place appropriate electronic filters to prevent children from accessing and viewing inappropriate Internet content. For any school or library that receives discounts for Internet access or for internal connections, CIPA imposes certain requirements. FMSD receives discounts for Internet Access through the E-Rate program and therefore, must be in compliance with the CIPA.

The Internet safety policies required by CIPA must include a technology protection measure for blocking access to "visual depictions" of obscene material, child pornography, and material that is "harmful to minors" when minors are accessing the computer. CIPA also requires that the Internet safety policy include monitoring of all online activities of minors. Additionally, the policy must address all of the following: *(a) access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web, (b) the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications, (c) unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking", and other unlawful activities by minors online, (d) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors; and (e) measures designed to restrict minors' access to materials harmful to minors.*

Recognizing that no filtering solution can be 100% effective, it is understood that all technology protection measures do not and will not work perfectly. In complying with CIPA, schools are expected to engage in a "good faith effort" to abide by the requirements of CIPA. CIPA does not create a private right to action, meaning that the discovery of objectionable material on a computer cannot result in a lawsuit complaining that a school violated CIPA.

These guidelines are provided so that you, the user and/or parent of the user are aware of the responsibilities you are about to assume. In general, this requires efficient, ethical, and legal utilization of the network resources. If a FMSD user violates any of these provisions, his or her account will be terminated; and future access could possibly be denied. *The signature(s) on the agreement form at the end of this handbook is (are) legally binding and indicates the party (parties) who signed has (have) read the terms and conditions carefully and understand(s) their significance.*

Forest Municipal School District (FMSD) - Network Terms and Conditions of Use

The network is provided for educational purposes. Access to network services is given to those who agree to act in accordance with this policy. Signed parent permission for students to use the Internet is required annually. All students from the sixth grade up, faculty, and all staff using the district's network must sign a written contract annually as well. The contract that pledges compliance with this Acceptable Use Policy is a legal binding document.

Access to the network, including the Internet, is a privilege, not a right. Non-compliance with these regulations will result in disciplinary and/or legal actions taken by FMSD authorities if deemed necessary. These include but are not limited to the following:

Personal Guidelines and Network Safety

1. Be polite and use appropriate language.
2. Assume that email and Internet access is not secure or confidential. Never send anything that you would not want viewed by others.
3. Do not disclose, use, disseminate or divulge personal and/or private information about yourself, minors or any others including personal identification such as, but not limited to, credit card information, social security numbers, telephone numbers, addresses, etc.
4. Immediately report to FMSD authorities any attempt by other Internet users to engage in inappropriate conversations or personal conduct.
5. There is to be absolutely no expectation of privacy on the FMSD network. Activities at any workstation or transmission and receipt of data can be monitored at any time, both electronically or by staff observation. This includes transmission and receipt of email, email attachments, Web browsing, and any other use of the network.

Illegal Activity

1. User agrees not to access, transmit or retransmit any materials(s) in furtherance of any illegal act or conspiracy to commit any illegal act in violation of United States, Mississippi, local government, or FMSD laws, policies or regulations.
2. User shall not access, transmit, or retransmit: copyrighted materials (including plagiarism), threatening, harassing, or obscene material, pornographic material, or material protected by trade secret, and/or any other material that is

deemed inappropriate to minors.

3. User shall not access, transmit, or retransmit any material that promotes violence or the destruction of persons or property by devices including, but not limited to, the use of firearms, explosives, fireworks, smoke bombs, incendiary devices, or other similar materials.
4. User shall not use the network for any illegal activity including, but not limited to, unauthorized access including hacking.
5. User shall not access, transmit, or retransmit language that may be considered offensive, defamatory, or abusive.
6. User shall not access, transmit or retransmit information that could cause danger or disruption or engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
7. User shall not access, transmit or retransmit information that harasses another person or causes distress to another person.

System Resource Limits

1. User shall only use the FMSD system for educational and career development activities and limited, high quality self-discovery activities as approved by FMSD faculty for a limited amount of time per week.
2. User agrees not to download files or install any software on the equipment of the FMSD network. If software, with a valid license agreement, needs to be installed a request should be submitted to the Technology Department.
3. User agrees not to post e-mail chain letters or engage in "spamming" (that is, sending an annoying or unnecessary message to multiple recipients).
4. User agrees to immediately notify the appropriate school authority should user access inappropriate information. This will assist protecting user against a claim of intentional violation of this policy.
5. User agrees not to make any changes to the setup of FMSD equipment without permission from the Technology Department.

User Rights

Prohibited user activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The Internet is considered a limited forum, similar to a school newspaper, and therefore FMSD may restrict user's right to free speech for valid educational reasons. FMSD will not restrict user's right to free speech on the basis of disagreement with the opinions expressed by user.
2. User shall use computer resources for academic purposes only. Therefore, as mandated by CIPA, filtering will be utilized on all computers accessing the Internet. Any attempts to bypass content filtering, such as the use of proxy sites or software, are subject to administrative discipline measures.
3. User should not expect files stored on school-based computers to remain private. Authorized staff will periodically inspect folders and logs of network usage will be kept at all times. Routine review and maintenance of the system may indicate that user has violated this policy, school codes, municipal law, state law or federal law. Parents of minor users shall have the right to inspect the contents of user's files.
4. FMSD will fully cooperate with local, state or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the user's network access, including local files, Internet access and E-mail.
5. Users may not advertise or sell materials using the FMSD network. This includes the use of eBay.
6. The use of the FMSD computer network is a privilege, not a right. The network is provided for academic use only and is not for entertainment or other activities outside the curriculum for students or beyond the boundaries of the jobs of the faculty, staff and administration.

Individual schools within the district may create additional guidelines and procedures consistent with this policy. Such guidelines and procedures will be appropriate for the electronic information resources being used and for the students, teachers and staff served at the school.

Consequences for Failure to Follow Terms and Conditions of Network Acceptable Use Policy

The purpose of the FMSD AUP is to protect our students, teachers, staff and network. There will be consequences for any user who fails to follow the FMSD AUP and school guidelines and policies. The consequences may include paying for damages, denial of access to technology, detention, written reprimand, dismissal or other remedies applicable under the school disciplinary policy, and state or federal law. At the discretion of FMSD, law enforcement authorities may be involved and any violations of state and/or federal law may result in criminal or civil prosecution. When using the FMSD system, it may seem as though these policies could be easily broken and that the user would not get caught. This is not true. Internet activity is automatically logged on each and every computer. Additional electronic footprints are left behind on every computer each time it is used; therefore, the potential for apprehension always exists.

By signing the **Internet/Network Acceptable Use Policy Agreement** at the end of this handbook, you agree to the following:

- I have read and understand the Acceptable Use Policy as set forth by FMSD.
- I understand that I have no expectation of privacy when using district equipment for any purpose, including email.
- I understand that all web access is tracked and monitored.
- I understand that attempting to compromise the district network in any way, including bypassing the web content filter, is a direct violation of this policy.
- I understand that software cannot be downloaded or otherwise installed on the FMSD network without a valid license agreement and approval from the Technology Department.
- I understand that I am responsible for equipment assigned for my use. I agree to monitor student use on said equipment. I understand that this equipment should never be left unsupervised with access to the network.

Internet Safety Policy (Board Approved October 9, 2023)

Introduction

It is the policy of Forest Municipal School District to: (a) prevent user access over its computer network to, or transmission of, inappropriate material via Internet, electronic mail, or other forms of direct electronic communications; (b) prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful online activity; (c) prevent unauthorized online disclosure, use, or dissemination of personal identification information of minors; and (d) comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act [Pub. L. No. 106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

Definitions

Key terms are as defined in the Children's Internet Protection Act.

Access to Inappropriate Material

To the extent practical, technology protection measures (or "Internet filters") shall be used to block or filter Internet, or other forms of electronic communications, access to inappropriate information.

Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, blocking shall be applied to visual depictions of material deemed obscene or child pornography, or to any material deemed harmful to minors.

Subject to staff supervision, technology protection measures may be disabled for adults or, in the case of minors, minimized only for bona fide research or other lawful purposes.

Inappropriate Network Usage

To the extent practical, steps shall be taken to promote the safety and security of users of the Forest Municipal School District online computer network when using electronic mail, chat rooms, instant messaging, and other forms of direct electronic communications.

Specifically, as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act, prevention of inappropriate network usage includes: (a) unauthorized access, including so-called 'hacking,' and other unlawful activities; and (b) unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors.

Education, Supervision and Monitoring

It shall be the responsibility of all members of the Forest Municipal School District's staff to educate, supervise and monitor appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy, the Children's Internet Protection Act, the Neighborhood Children's Internet Protection Act, and the Protecting Children in the 21st Century Act.

Procedures for the disabling or otherwise modifying any technology protection measures shall be the responsibility of The Technology Director or designated representatives.

The Forest Municipal School District or designated representatives will provide age-appropriate training for students who use the Forest Municipal School District Internet facilities. The training provided will be designed to promote the Forest Municipal School District's commitment to:

- I. The standards and acceptable use of Internet services as set forth in the Forest Municipal School District's Internet Acceptable Use Policy;

- II. Student safety with regard to:
 - a. safety on the Internet;
 - b. appropriate behavior while on online, on social networking Web sites, and in chat rooms; and
 - c. cyberbullying awareness and response.
- III. Compliance with the E-rate requirements of the Children’s Internet Protection Act (“CIPA”).

Following receipt of this training, the student will acknowledge that he/she received the training, understood it, and will follow the provisions of the District's acceptable use policies.

INTERNET AND TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT GUIDELINES (Staff/Teacher)

Purchasing Procedures

The FMSD Technology Department is responsible for determining the technological needs of the district based on sound research, security and capacity planning. All hardware and software purchases, including printers, ink cartridges, etc. must be approved by the Technology Department in advance to ensure standardization and compatibility, and also to ensure that both current and future curriculum needs are met.

Computer Equipment Inventory (Fixed Assets)

An accurate classroom/lab/office inventory must be maintained by teachers and other district personnel at all times. All district owned computer equipment must be included on the classroom/lab/office inventory. All additions or removals of district owned equipment must be approved in advance by the FMSD Technology Department. Highly walkable equipment such as laptops, Ipads, etc. shall be secured at all times. No district owned equipment shall be used for personal reasons, and under no circumstances will students be allowed to use the teacher/staff computer.

Guidelines for New and/or Donated Computer Equipment

- FMSD shall maintain/repair all products that meet the minimum standards for new and/or donated equipment.
- The PC Standard shall be determined on a Case-by-Case basis by the Technology Department
- The Network Printer Standard for all classrooms, labs, and offices is: Lase Printer or equivalent. The District will not provide ink for inkjet printers or any other unauthorized printer.

Technology Support

The District uses *Spiceworks* for a Helpdesk program. All help requests should be sent to help@forest.k12.ms.us and should include the requester’s name, school, and room number.

Technology Maintenance

- The FMSD Technology Department staff shall ensure that all District-owned network servers, computers and supportive equipment operate efficiently.
- The FMSD Technology Department shall be solely responsible for adding new equipment to the network. This includes any workstation connected to the network that must have software installed and configured as well as a physical wire connecting it with the network equipment. All software and wiring configuration will be completed by technology personnel only.
- All personnel shall contact the Technology Department in advance regarding any network design and/or hardware purchases should they wish to expand their network capability.
- NO PC OR COMPUTER RELATED DEVICE SHALL BE MOVED FROM ROOM TO ROOM OR EVEN WITHIN THE ROOM PRIOR WITHOUT THE PRIOR WRITTEN APPROVAL OF THE FMSD TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT.

Maintenance of Personal Technology Equipment

Maintenance of any computer, related peripheral or software belonging to a District employee and used in the workplace is the sole responsibility of the owner. District technicians shall not service or repair any computer or related equipment that does not belong to the District. No internal components belonging to the District shall be placed in any personal equipment, whether as enhancements, upgrades or replacements. The District shall not be responsible for any damage to or theft of, personal equipment resulting from use in the workplace. No personally owned computers will be attached to the District’s network without the prior written approval of the Director of Technology.

District E-Mail

- The Information Technology Department staff is responsible for the maintenance of the District email system. This system is complex and requires special software be installed and configured on each workstation that has access to the email system.
- There is no guarantee of privacy or confidentiality for messages or information that is transmitted electronically.
- Users must not leave their password available in an obvious place near the terminal or share their password with anyone, unless asked by a current member of the Information Technology Department.

- The District retains the right to review, store and disclose all information sent over the District electronic mail systems for any legally permissible reason, including but not limited to determining whether the information is a public record, whether it contains information discoverable in litigation and to access District information in the employee's absence. The employee will be notified if the District discloses any such information.
- Users have the responsibility to maintain the integrity of the electronic mail system and are responsible for all solicited mail received in their user accounts. Users have the responsibility to report violations of privacy to their immediate supervisor.

Staff Privileges/Responsibilities

- **PRIOR TO RECEIVING AUTHORIZATION TO USE THE INTERNET, ALL STAFF MUST SIGN THAT THEY HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY CONCERNING INTERNET ACCESS.**
- Authorized users have the privilege to access the Internet and to exchange information.
- Users are advised that email and/or Internet correspondence is not privileged or confidential.
- Communications are monitored by the administration to assure that Internet use is in support of School District goals.
- Authorized users-accounts must be in support of the educational goals the District.
- While exercising privileges to use the Internet as an educational resource, users shall also monitor and accept the responsibility for all solicited material received. The user is responsible for immediately reporting unsolicited, inappropriate material to his/her supervisor.
- Users have the responsibility to keep copyrighted software of any kind from entering the school via the Internet. Users have the responsibility of keeping all pornographic material, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the network, from entering the school via the Internet.

MULTI-TIERED SYSTEM OF SUPPORTS (MTSS)/ FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT (FBA/BIP)/CHILD FIND

Multi-Tiered Teacher Support Systems (MTSS):

The Mississippi Department of Education adopted State Board Policy Part 3, Chapter 41.1, August, 2016, requires each school district to implement and maintain an instructional model designed to meet the needs of all students. The Multi-Tiered System provides a layered continuum of supports:

(Universal) Tier 1: Quality classroom instruction based on MS Curriculum Frameworks

(Targeted) Tier 2: Focused supplemental instruction

(Intensive) Tier 3: Intensive interventions specifically designed to meet the individual needs of students

MTSS establishes shared leadership between the district and school levels to maintain collaborative team based, data driven decision making. Support teams and teachers should use progress monitoring information to (a) determine if students are making adequate progress, (b) identify students as soon as they begin to fall behind, and (c) modify instruction early enough to ensure each and every student gains essential skills. Monitoring of student progress is an ongoing process that may be measured through informal classroom assessment, benchmark assessment instruments and large-scale assessments.

If strategies at Tiers 1 and 2 are unsuccessful, students must be referred to the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Team. The MTSS is the problem-solving unit responsible for interventions developed at Tier 3. Each school must have a MTSS Team implemented in accordance with the process developed by the Mississippi Department of Education. The chairperson of the MTSS shall be the school principal as the school's instructional leader or the principal's designee. The designee may not be an individual whose primary responsibility is special education. Interventions will be:

- designed to address the deficit areas;
- research based;
- implemented as designed by the MTSS Team;
- supported by data regarding the effectiveness of interventions.

After a referral is made, the MTSS must develop and begin implementation of an intervention(s) within two weeks. No later than eight weeks after implementation of the intervention(s) the MTSS Team must conduct a documented review of the interventions to determine success of the intervention. No later than 16 weeks after implementation of the intervention(s), a second review must be conducted to determine whether the intervention is successful. If the intervention(s) is determined to be unsuccessful, then the student will be referred for a comprehensive assessment. In addition to failure to make adequate progress following Tiers 1 and 2, students will be referred to the MTSS for interventions as specified in guidelines developed by MDE if any of the following events occur.

- A. **Grades K-3:** A student has failed one (1) grade;
- B. **Grades 4-12:** A student has failed two (2) grades;

- C. A student failed either of the preceding two grades and has been suspended or expelled for more than twenty (20) days in the current school year; or
- D. A student is promoted from Grade 3 to Grade 4 under a good cause exemption of the Literacy-Based Promotion Act.

Referrals to the MTSS Team must be made within the first twenty (20) school days of a school year if the student meets any of the criteria A-D stated above. Principals will monitor the MTSS Team and Three-Tier Model process to insure that all students receive the appropriate interventions as necessary.

Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)/ Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP):

Special Education

To remain in compliance with IDEA, the FMSD Office of Special Education will review discipline referrals for students with disabilities regularly. An IEP meeting will be conducted when a student with disabilities is nearing 10 days of out of school suspension to review and/or revise existing services and determine if additional services or supports are needed. In case of a serious discipline offense, the principal/school will be responsible for contacting the Special Education Director. When a student with a disability shows a pattern of disruptive behavior, an IEP meeting will be held to discuss the development of a behavior plan or a revision to an existing plan. This may include a FBA/BIP when necessary.

When a suspension results in 10 days or more removal or constitutes a change of placement, a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR) must be held before the 10th day. A Manifestation Determination Review is a process to determine if a student’s behavior was or was not a manifestation of his/her disability. The MDR is completed as part of an IEP meeting.

Regular Education

Each school will be responsible for referring regular education students who have a pattern of behavioral referrals to MTSS Team. Behavioral interventions must be documented and tracked. If one intervention is not effective in correcting the behavior, the team will need to change the intervention. If a regular education student reaches Tier III without success, a functional behavioral assessment can be requested.

Child Find

Forest Municipal School District participates in the ongoing statewide effort to identify, locate and evaluate children ages birth through 20 who reside within our school zone and may have a disability. Early identification of children in need of special education experiences is most important to each child’s success.

Our Special Education program provides services to students who have been determined to have one or more disabilities. Information given by parents and agencies assist FMSD to determine present and future program needs to ensure a free appropriate public education is provided to all children with disabilities.

Family members, physicians, and educators, as well as representatives of various agencies such as the Health Department, Department of Mental Health, Head Start facilities, and day care centers may refer children.

Referrals may be made for a child residing in the Forest Municipal School District by contacting:

ShaTerria Warren
 Child Find Coordinator
 325 Cleveland Street
 Forest, MS 39074 (601)469-3250 ext. 1014 or swarren@forest.k12.ms.us

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Faculty members are allowed to hold employment other than their position with the district provided that such employment does not interfere with the performance of their contractual obligations to the district. In the event that outside employment interferes with the performance of contractual obligations, such employment must be terminated or the faculty member may be subject to dismissal or non-renewal.

PARENT / TEACHER CONFERENCES AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Conferences: Parents are encouraged to meet with teachers, counselors, and administrators regularly concerning their child's educational progress. Since teacher availability is limited during the school day, it is suggested that parents contact the school's office to schedule all conferences.

Parent/teacher conferences should be held as often as necessary, and may be scheduled to include a counselor and/or an administrator. Conferences will be scheduled at the earliest convenient time and will be scheduled during the teacher's planning period if possible. If not possible, the conference will be scheduled before or after school. All appointments for conferences that will include administrators or counselors must be scheduled through the office in advance. When scheduling conferences, teachers should instruct all individuals to report to the office upon arrival to the school and be escorted to the conference location.

On occasion, the school's administration or staff may require the parent/guardian to meet for a conference to discuss their child's discipline, academics, etc.

[Parent/teacher conference, House Bill 722, effective July 1, 1996, amends Mississippi Code S37-11-53(3)] to provide that a parent/guardian who fails to attend a discipline conference to which they were summoned shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon a conviction shall be fined up to \$250.00.

Community Relations: In an ongoing effort to improve parent/community relations, every teacher shall be required to make a worthy attempt to establish and maintain effective ongoing communications with each student's parent or guardian throughout the school year.

Faculty members should attend and participate in all PTO/PTA, Open House, and other regularly scheduled meetings. Faculty members are encouraged to attend school functions as often as possible to assist in building positive community relations. At principal's discretion, faculty members may be required to attend school related meetings.

PAY SCALE – CERTIFIED PERSONNEL

FOREST MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SALARY SCHEDULE TEACHER 2025 - 2026

Shall be Submitted Again When New Scale is Released by MDE

Yrs Exp.	STATE AAAA	LOCAL AAAA	TOTAL AAAA	STATE AAA	LOCAL AAA	TOTAL AAA	STATE AA	LOCAL AA	TOTAL AA	STATE A	LOCAL A	TOTAL A	YRS EXP.
0	45,500	1,000	46,500	44,000	950	44,950	43,000	900	43,900	41,500	850	42,350	+
1	46,100	1,010	47,110	44,550	960	45,510	43,525	910	44,435	41,900	860	42,760	1
2	46,700	1,020	47,720	45,100	970	46,070	44,050	920	44,970	42,300	870	43,170	2
3	47,300	1,030	48,330	45,650	980	46,630	44,575	930	45,505	42,700	880	43,580	3
4	47,900	1,040	48,940	46,200	990	47,190	45,100	940	46,040	43,100	890	43,990	4
5	49,250	1,050	50,300	47,500	1,000	48,500	46,350	950	47,300	44,300	900	45,200	5
6	49,850	1,060	50,910	48,050	1,010	49,060	46,875	960	47,835	44,700	910	45,610	6
7	50,450	1,070	51,520	48,600	1,020	49,620	47,400	970	48,370	45,100	920	46,020	7
8	51,050	1,080	52,130	49,150	1,030	50,180	47,925	980	48,905	45,500	930	46,430	8
9	51,650	1,090	52,740	49,700	1,040	50,740	48,450	990	49,440	45,900	940	46,840	9
10	53,000	1,100	54,100	51,000	1,050	52,050	49,700	1,000	50,700	47,100	950	48,050	10
11	53,600	1,110	54,710	51,550	1,060	52,610	50,225	1,010	51,235	47,500	960	48,460	11
12	54,200	1,120	55,320	52,100	1,070	53,170	50,750	1,020	51,770	47,900	970	48,870	12
13	54,800	1,130	55,930	52,650	1,080	53,730	51,275	1,030	52,305	48,300	980	49,280	13
14	55,400	1,140	56,540	53,200	1,090	54,290	51,800	1,040	52,840	48,700	990	49,690	14
15	56,750	1,150	57,900	54,500	1,100	55,600	53,050	1,050	54,100	49,900	1,000	50,900	15
16	57,350	1,160	58,510	55,050	1,110	56,160	53,575	1,060	54,635	50,300	1,010	51,310	16
17	57,950	1,170	59,120	55,600	1,120	56,720	54,100	1,070	55,170	50,700	1,020	51,720	17
18	58,550	1,180	59,730	56,150	1,130	57,280	54,625	1,080	55,705	51,100	1,030	52,130	18
19	59,150	1,190	60,340	56,700	1,140	57,840	55,150	1,090	56,240	51,500	1,040	52,540	19
20	60,500	1,200	61,700	58,000	1,150	59,150	56,400	1,100	57,500	52,700	1,050	53,750	20
21	61,100	1,210	62,310	58,550	1,160	59,710	56,925	1,110	58,035	53,100	1,060	54,160	21
22	61,700	1,220	62,920	59,100	1,170	60,270	57,450	1,120	58,570	53,500	1,070	54,570	22
23	62,300	1,230	63,530	59,650	1,180	60,830	57,975	1,130	59,105	53,900	1,080	54,980	23
24	62,900	1,240	64,140	60,200	1,190	61,390	58,500	1,140	59,640	54,300	1,090	55,390	24
25	65,400	1,250	66,650	62,700	1,200	63,900	61,000	1,150	62,150	56,800	1,100	57,900	25
26	66,000	1,260	67,260	63,250	1,210	64,460	61,525	1,160	62,685	57,200	1,110	58,310	26
27	66,600	1,270	67,870	63,800	1,220	65,020	62,050	1,170	63,220	57,600	1,120	58,720	27
28	67,200	1,280	68,480	64,350	1,230	65,580	62,575	1,180	63,755	58,000	1,130	59,130	28
29	67,800	1,290	69,090	64,900	1,240	66,140	63,100	1,190	64,290	58,400	1,140	59,540	29
30	68,400	1,300	69,700	65,450	1,250	66,700	63,625	1,200	64,825	58,800	1,150	59,950	30
31	69,000	1,310	70,310	66,000	1,260	67,260	64,150	1,210	65,360	59,200	1,160	60,360	31
32	69,600	1,320	70,920	66,550	1,270	67,820	64,675	1,220	65,895	59,600	1,170	60,770	32
33	70,200	1,330	71,530	67,100	1,280	68,380	65,200	1,230	66,430	60,000	1,180	61,180	33
34	70,800	1,340	72,140	67,650	1,290	68,940	65,725	1,240	66,965	60,400	1,190	61,590	34
35 & Above	71,400	1,350	72,750	68,200	1,300	69,500	66,250	1,250	67,500	60,800	1,200	62,000	35

PROGRESS REPORTS/REPORT CARD SCHEDULE

Progress Report #1.....	August 27, 2025
Report Card #1.....	October 16, 2025
Progress Report #2.....	November 13, 2025
Report Card #2.....	January 8, 2026
Progress Report #3.....	February 12, 2026
Report Card #3.....	March 19, 2026
Progress Report #4.....	April 16, 2026
Report Card #4.....	May 21, 2026

NOTE: The dates listed above are tentative and are subject to change.

PROMOTION & RETENTION (STUDENTS)

The promotion and retention of students for grades K-12 in the Forest Municipal School District shall be based on the student's individual academic achievement and progress on the curriculum as adopted by the school board. The retention of a student or repetition of a grade in K-12 for the sole purpose of participating in extra-curricular activities is prohibited (Board Policy IHE).

Student performance on the essential objectives must be used as the principle basis for determining whether a student passes or fails.

1. The principal is responsible for ensuring that promotion and retention decisions are based upon student achievement of essential objectives as directed by board policy.
2. Successful completion of a course shall be based upon:
 - a. A grade average of **60** (HMS and FHS) or **65** (FES) or higher as the final grade in the course on all material covered.
 - b. Mastery of the essential standards (State and Local).
 - c. Compliance with attendance regulations
3. Student promotion from grade to grade shall be determined annually at the end of the regular school year. The final copy of the report card shall indicate to the parent and student whether the student has been promoted to the next grade level or retained in the current grade level.
4. Special Education
 - a. Students eligible for special education services will be graded in accordance with the standard numerical grading scale. Students with disabilities may receive accommodations and modifications in accordance to his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP).
 - b. For every student receiving special education services, a diploma option will be decided by the IEP Committee upon entering the 9th grade. The appropriate services and supports will be documented in the IEP.
 - c. At intervals, but at least annually, the student's IEP will be reviewed and revised as his/her achievement and needs change. The possibility for change from regular diploma to certificate or from certificate to regular diploma will be consistent with the guidelines established in the MS Accountability Manual.

Non-Promotion for Kindergarteners: Kindergarten students must master all standards as mandated by the state to advance from Kindergarten to first grade.

Promotion Requirements for Grades 1-4: Students in grades 1-4 must satisfy the following requirements:

1. Students must be in attendance at school with no more than twenty (20) absences during the school year. If there are extenuating circumstances, the parent can petition the principal for an exception.
2. Promotion to grades 2, 3, 4, and 5 requires passing grades in English Language Arts, and Math, plus either Science or Social Studies.
3. Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, a student scoring at the lowest achievement level in reading on the established state assessments for 3rd grade will not be promoted to 4th grade unless the student meets the "good cause" exemptions for promotion (LEGAL REF.: MS CODE – Literacy Based Promotion Act, 2013).

Promotion Requirements for Grades 5-8: Students must satisfy the following requirements in order to advance to the sixth, seventh, eighth, or ninth grade:

1. Must be in attendance in school with no more than 20 absences in the school year or 10 absences in a semester course. If there are extenuating circumstances, the parent can appeal to the Attendance Committee.
2. To be promoted to Grades 6 - 9 a student must pass Reading, Language, Math, Science and Social Studies with a 60%. A retention committee will review all failures and the following will be considered: If a subject is failed, the committee will review the child's performance [i.e. class work, homework, class participation, etc] and data [i.e. quizzes, weekly tests, unit/chapter tests, nine week tests] over the course of the year.

Grades 9–12: Students in grades 9-12 will be awarded Carnegie units of credit upon mastery of the essential objectives and a yearly average of **60** or higher. The classification of students for grades 9-12 is as follows:

Students who entered 9th grade in 2017 and thereafter will be classified by the following manner:

- Freshmen - Must have completed the eighth grade in an accredited school.
- Sophomore - Must have completed at least six (6) academic units of high school work.
- Junior - Must have completed at least twelve (12) academic units of high school work.
- Senior - Must have completed at least nineteen (19) academic units of high school work.
- NOTE: The classification of senior does not necessarily qualify the pupil as a candidate for graduation

Graduation Requirements – Entering 9th grade students must earn **24** Carnegie units to graduate from Forest High School. All Mississippi graduates **must pass all four end of course assessments** or meet other requirements as

prescribed by law. (See high school counselor for more information).

PURCHASING / FUND RAISING / DONATIONS / INVENTORY PROCEDURES

All purchasing is handled by each school or district office. To purchase an item, the employee must submit a purchase requisition to the principal/director. Upon approval by central office, a purchase order will be issued. **Absolutely no purchases shall be made without a purchase order approved in advance by the principal/director and the superintendent.** Any employee(s) making purchases without proper authorization as documented with a purchase order shall be personally responsible to the company/vendor for all costs. An approved requisition and a purchase order are also required before any preview materials such as textbooks can be ordered.

Fund Raising Procedures: All fund raising activities must be approved in advance by the principal, superintendent or designee. Fundraisers that require students to go from house to house or door to door to solicit funds or sell products should be avoided. Any duplication of other group's ongoing fundraisers shall not be approved.

Upon approval from the superintendent, the principal/director shall notify the fundraiser sponsor to proceed with the activity. Once approved, all district purchasing procedures must be followed.

1. Submit all purchase requisitions to the Principal/Director attach the approved fundraiser form.
2. Principal/Director enters requisitions
3. Central Office will process the requisition(s) and issue the purchase order number(s).

District employees must never contract with any company or vendor until all paperwork has been approved. Any employee who contracts with a company/vendor without approval will be personally responsible for all costs incurred in the transaction. Once the fundraiser is complete, the sponsor must send all invoices to the Central Office or school secretary.

Donations: Any materials, equipment, or funds donated to the school automatically become school property and must be approved/accepted by the Board of Education. The principal at each school must submit a memo to the Superintendent of Schools and the School Board describing all donations for approval/acceptance.

Grants: District employees must have school board approval before applying for a grant. Grant money needs to be deposited at Central Office so a budget can be made before expenditure can be made.

Advertising, Solicitation, Sales: No advertising, solicitation, sales, or service of any kind is allowed on any Forest Municipal School District campus without prior approval from the Superintendent or designee. No district personnel shall solicit any funds/services from any source without prior approval from their principal or superintendent.

Inventory: Teachers are legally responsible for the care and security of all inventoried items assigned to their classroom. All equipment, furniture, textbooks, etc. that are assigned to their classroom or office must be listed on their inventory sheet. All valuable or highly walkable items must have a FIXED ASSET tag affixed to the item. Under no circumstances shall any school owned equipment or supplies be removed from the assigned classroom or school premises without written permission from the superintendent or his designee. Employees are responsible for the replacement cost of all inventory items, whether they have been damaged, lost, or stolen.

IMPORTANT: To make any changes to your inventory (add, delete, transfer, report stolen, or lost), it is your responsibility to contact the Technology Department for the appropriate forms. Never discard any broken or damaged item that has a fixed asset number affixed to them. These items cannot be discarded until the request to the superintendent and school board has been approved.

PURCHASE ORDERS AND CONTRACTS POLICY

SCHOOL DISTRICT PURCHASING

The district has established an organized purchasing system that includes:

1. Requisitions
 2. Purchase Orders
 3. Receiving Report - Packing Slips/Delivery Packing Slip (if available)
 4. Invoices
-
- A. Purchase requisitions are completed by requesting departments/divisions/ schools or teachers requesting to make any necessary purchases.
 - B. Purchase orders are issued by the school district to vendors ordering the items requested by departments/divisions/schools or teachers. A purchase order is the device by which management places an order. Accepting a purchase order by a vendor constitutes a legally binding contract. The purchase order gives the vendor authority to ship the required items and binds the district for payment.
 - C. Receiving Report - Packing Slips/Delivery Packing Slip (if available)
 - D. Invoice

Using the documents above, the purchasing process works as follows:

1. The school district will utilize purchase requisitions to be prepared and entered by school personnel whenever there is a request for materials. When a properly prepared and approved requisition is received by the school office, it should be reviewed to ensure that the requisition amount will not exceed the budget for that particular area. All requisitions should be subjected to public purchasing law requirements. A determination should be made as to whether or not quotes or bids shall be obtained prior to the actual placing of the order, in accordance with public purchasing laws.
2. Once the public purchasing law requirements are fulfilled, a purchase order will be issued. The purchase order can be given to the vendor to place the order.
3. When ordered materials are received, the receiving report shall be signed by the person. Prior to paying any claim, the accounts payable clerk should match the following documents:
 - a) Purchase requisitions
 - b) Purchase order
 - c) Receiving Report - Packing Slips/Delivery Packing Slip (if available)
 - d) Vendor invoice

All purchase orders shall be controlled but requisitions do not require prenumbering.

A purchase order log shall be maintained by purchase order number by the financial accounting software. The district will also maintain a file copy of purchase orders.

The district shall have a centralized purchasing system. With centralized purchasing, all requisitions are entered at schools or departments and all purchase orders are processed at the central office.

The school board has established policies concerning school district purchasing in addition to MDE guidelines/policies. Purchasing policies and procedures shall be approved by the school board and recorded on its official minutes.

LEGAL REF.: MS CODE as cited; CROSS REF.: Policy DJE — Purchasing

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 & THE AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and The American with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination against disabled or handicapped persons, including students and staff members, by school districts receiving federal assistance of any kind. Students or staff members having any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life function (including learning) are covered under this act. Requests for a 504 plan will follow the Child Find process. For more information, please contact the District's 504 Coordinator, ShaTerria Warren, at 601-469-3250 ext. 1014 or swarren@forest.k12.ms.us.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

It is the policy of Forest Municipal School District that no employee or student shall sexually harass another. Any employee or student will be subject to disciplinary action for violation of this policy.

Policy: It is the policy of the Forest Municipal School District to maintain an environment that is free from sexual harassment. No employee or student of the district shall be subjected to sexual harassment.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the Forest Municipal School District staff to harass another staff member or student through conduct or communications of a sexual nature as defined in Section III. It shall also be a violation of this policy for a student to harass other students, Teachers, Administrators, or staff through conduct or communications of a sexual nature.

Each administrator/director shall be responsible for promoting understanding and acceptance of, and assuring compliance with, state and federal laws and board policy and procedures governing sexual harassment within the confines of each school or office. Violations of this policy or procedure will be cause for disciplinary action.

Definition: Sexual harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's

2. employment or advancement or of a student's participation in school programs or activities; or
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an employee or student
3. Conduct which has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's or student's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or learning environment.

Sexual harassment, as set forth in board policy may include, but not limited to, the following:

1. Verbal harassment or abuse
2. Pressure for sexual activity
3. Repeated remarks with sexual or demeaning implications
4. Unwelcome touching
5. Sexual jokes, posters, etc.
6. Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, job, etc.

Procedures: Any person who alleges sexual harassment by a staff member or student in the school district may use the procedure detailed in the Forest Municipal School District Grievance Procedure or may complain directly to his or her immediate supervisor, building principal, or district Title IX Coordinator, Reagan Shoemaker. Filing a grievance or otherwise reporting sexual harassment will not reflect upon the individual's status, nor will it affect future employment, grades, or work assignments.

The right of confidentiality, for both the accuser and the accused, will be respected consistent with the school district's legal obligations and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and to take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.

Sanctions: A substantiated charge against a staff member in the school district shall subject that staff member to disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

A substantiated charge against a student in the school district shall subject that student to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion, consistent with the student discipline code.

Notification: Notice of this policy will be circulated to all schools and departments of the Forest Municipal School District in the faculty/staff and student handbooks. Principals at each school site are responsible for providing the policy to all faculty and staff under their direct supervision, and document the process. Principals may assist teachers in explaining the policy to students each school year to deter all forms of sexual harassment.

SNACK AND BEVERAGE REGULATIONS FOR MISSISSIPPI SCHOOLS

BEVERAGE REGULATIONS

The Mississippi Board of Education recognizes the critical role that adequate hydration plays in healthy weights, disease prevention, and dental health, as well as academic performance. The fluid and nutrition needs of young people at school are best met through well-balanced, nutrient-rich school meals provided through Child Nutrition Programs, planned by nutrition professionals following US Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines.

TIME OF DAY

The following beverage regulations apply to all Mississippi school campuses during the regular and extended school day defined as the hours between 7:00 am and 4:00 pm. The extended school day includes activities such as clubs, yearbook, band and choir practice, student government, drama and childcare / latch-key programs.

This beverage policy does not apply to school-related events; such as interscholastic sporting events, school plays, and band concerts; where parents and other adults constitute a significant portion of the audience or are selling beverages as boosters.

IMPLEMENTATION

As of the 2007 – 2008 school year, all full-calorie, sugared carbonated soft drinks shall no longer be sold to students in Mississippi schools during the school day. As of the 2008 – 2009 school year, only the following options may be made available for beverage vending:

BEVERAGES

Elementary School

- Bottled water
- Low fat and non fat regular and flavored milk* with up to 160 calories / 8 ounces
- Up to 8 ounce serving of milk and 100% juice**
- 100% juice** with no added sweeteners and up to 120 calories / 8 ounces

Middle School

- Same as elementary school, except juice and milk may be sold in up to 12 ounces servings***

High School

- Bottled water
- No or low calorie beverages with up to 10 calories / 8 ounces
- Up to 12 ounce servings of milk, 100% juice**, light juice and sports drinks
- Low fat and non fat regular and flavored milk with up to 160 calories / 12 ounces
- 100% juice** with no added sweeteners and up to 120 calories / 12 ounces
- Light juices and sports drinks with no more than 66 calories / 8 ounces
- At least 50% of beverages must be water and no or low calorie options

*Milk includes nutritionally equivalent milk alternatives (per USDA), such as soymilk.

** 100% juice that contains at least 10% of the recommended daily value for 3 or more vitamins and minerals.

*** As a practical matter, if middle school and high school students have shared access to areas on a common campus or in common buildings, then the school community has the option to adopt the high school standard.

SNACK REGULATION

The Mississippi Board of Education recognizes the critical roles that optimal nutrition play in healthy weights, disease prevention, and dental health, as well as academic performance. The nutrition needs of young people at school are best met through well-balanced, nutrient-rich school meals provided through Child Nutrition Programs, planned by nutrition professionals following US Department of Agriculture (USDA) guidelines.

The following regulations apply to all Mississippi school campuses during the school day defined as the hours between 7:00 am and 4:00 pm. To protect the integrity of the Child Nutrition Programs and to ensure that children do not have to choose between the School Lunch/Breakfast programs and vended items, schools shall follow the Competitive Food policy EEH.

Food sales outside of Child Nutrition Programs, including vending machines, student stores, snacks bars, and other fundraising programs, are available in Mississippi schools at the discretion of the school district. When schools decide to offer vending, they shall provide a selection of healthful food options to students, with the following overall goals:

1. Minimize excessive intake of calories, especially empty calories from fat and sugar.
2. Increase intake of nutrients for optimal growth, development, and brain functioning, especially from nutrient-rich, minimally processed foods like whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, lean meats, and dairy foods.
3. Develop marketing and nutrition education strategies to promote healthful options to all students, families, and school staff.

The following regulations cover all foods through vending machines, student stores, snack bars, fundraisers, and other sales available to students. Research supports that proper nutrition improves the health and performance of teachers, as well as students. Teachers also serve as important adult role models to children. With these factors in mind, at least 50 percent of the items vended in staff areas (those inaccessible to students) shall meet these regulations.

These regulations shall not be applicable to nor restrict the food items made available at school-related events (such as interscholastic sports, school plays, band concerts, or family events) where adults constitute a significant portion of the audience or are selling foods in booster programs.

FOR GRADES 7-12:

The following restrictions will govern food items that may be offered for sale. To assist schools in complying with these regulations, the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition will maintain a list of products meeting the standards. Food vendors must submit nutrition information on food products in order to have them included on the list.

NOTE: Vending to elementary students (grades K-6) may be appropriate in districts where school lunches are served early in the day (10:30 to 11:00 am). In order to promote optimal learning in the afternoon, the Mississippi Board of Education recognizes that the foods allowed in grades 7-12 may also be sold to children in grades K-6 at the discretion of the school district.

FOODS

Snacks, Bars, and Dessert Items

This category includes, but is not limited to chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, peanut butter and other nut butters, jerky, cookies, animal/graham crackers and cereal bars, granola bars, bakery items (e.g., pastries, toaster pastries, muffins, soft pretzels), frozen desserts, ice cream, cheese, yogurt and smoothies (made with low-fat yogurt or other low-fat dairy alternatives and/or fruit/juice).

Based on manufacturer's nutritional data or Nutrition Facts labels, all foods must meet the following criteria per package:

- **Key Nutrients:** At least 5% of the recommended Daily Value (DV) for three or more nutrients (fiber; vitamins A, C, D, E; thiamin, niacin, riboflavin, calcium, iron, and zinc). At least 3 grams protein per package may be substituted for one of the listed nutrients. Schools are encouraged to offer foods that:
 - Are good sources (at least 10% of the recommended Daily Value or DV) of one or more nutrients listed above.
 - Contain at least 5 grams protein.
 - List a whole grain as the first item on the ingredient list.
- **Total Calories:** No more than 200 calories per package.
- **Fat:** No more than 35 percent of total calories from fat and 7 grams maximum (with the exception of nuts, seeds, peanut and other nut butters, and cheeses).
- **Saturated Fat and Trans Fat:** No more than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat and/or trans fat and 2 grams maximum (with the exception of nuts, seeds, peanut and other nut butters, and cheeses).
- **Added Sugar:** No more than 35 percent added sugar by weight and 15 grams maximum (excludes sugars naturally occurring in fruits, vegetables, and dairy). For smoothies (made with low-fat yogurt or other low-fat dairy alternatives and/or fruit/juice), yogurt and pudding, no more than 5 grams total sugar (added and naturally occurring) per ounce.

Fruits and Vegetables

Include quality* fruits and vegetables available anywhere snack items are sold. For example, dried fruit in vending machines, fresh fruit (e.g., pineapple slices or melon cubes), or fresh vegetables (e.g., baby carrots) in snack bars and concessions.

Based on manufacturer's nutritional data or Nutrition Facts labels, all foods must meet the following criteria per package:

- **Key Nutrients:** At least 5% of the recommended Daily Value (DV) for three or more nutrients (fiber; vitamins A, C, D, E; thiamin, niacin, riboflavin, calcium, iron, and zinc). Schools are encouraged to offer foods with at least 10% of the recommended Daily Value (DV) for one or more of these nutrients.
- **Total Calories:** No more than 200 total calories.
- **Fat:** No more than 35 percent of total calories from fat and 7 grams maximum.
- **Saturated Fat and Trans Fat:** No more than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat and/or 0 grams of trans fat.
- **Added Sugar:** No more than 35 percent added sugar by weight and 55 grams maximum (excludes sugars naturally occurring in fruits and vegetables).
- **“Quality”** means fruits and vegetables prepared and packaged without added fat, sugar, or sodium

Timeline: Beginning with the 2024-2025 School year, all vended foods offered must meet the standards listed above.

STAFF PROTECTION

The Forest Municipal School District will be vigorous in its protection of all employees from physical, verbal, and/or psychological abuse. According to Mississippi Code, Section 37-11-21, if any parent, guardian or other person, shall abuse any superintendent, principal, teacher or school bus driver while school is in session or at a school-related activity, in the presence of school pupils, such person shall be guilty of a crime and subject to arrest. Any interpretation of this statute is to include any striking, assaulting, or physical attack, as well as abuse or insult.

STUDENT BULLYING: POLICY AND PROCEDURES

STUDENT BULLYING: Definitions and Procedures

JDDA (9/11/2023)

The Board of Trustees of the Forest Municipal School District prohibits bullying or harassing behavior of students, school employees, or volunteers. (HB 263- A) The Forest Municipal School District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no person or school employee is subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by other students or other school employees.

1. Definitions Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that:
 - (a) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, or
 - (b) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's education, including but not limited to educational performance, opportunities, or benefits.

A "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

The above conduct constitutes bullying if that conduct interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school. (HB 263 - 6)

Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct, in the determination of the school superintendent or principal, renders the offending person's presence a disruption to the operation of the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the pupils and teacher of such class as a whole.

The District encourages anyone who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior to report the incident to the appropriate school official. Retaliation or reprisal against any person, including a victim, a witness, or another person, who in good faith provides information concerning an incident of bullying or harassing behavior, is prohibited. (HB 263 - B)

The Forest Municipal School District recognizes the fundamental right of every student to take "reasonable actions" as may be necessary to defend himself or herself from an attack by another student who has evidenced menacing or threatening behavior through bullying or harassing.

"Reasonable action" includes, but is not limited to, promptly reporting the bullying or harassing behavior to a teacher, principal, counselor, or other school employee.

These procedures shall be appropriately placed in District personnel policy handbooks, school handbooks that include discipline policies and procedures, and any other policy or procedure that deals with student or employee behavior.

The School Board directs the superintendent or designee to design and implement procedures for reporting, investigating, and addressing bullying and harassing behaviors.

Legal Reference: MS Code of 1972 37-11-67 and 37-11-69

STUDENT COMPLAINTS OF BULLYING OR HARASSING BEHAVIOR - PROCEDURES

I. Procedures for Reporting a Complaint

A. Any student, school employee, or volunteer who feels he/she has been a victim of bullying or harassing behavior, or has witnessed or who has reliable information that a student, school employee, or volunteer has been subject to bullying or harassing behavior shall report such conduct to a teacher, principal, counselor, or other school official. The report shall be made promptly, but no later than five (5) calendar days after the alleged act or acts occurred. (HB 263-D)

B. The school official shall complete a "Bullying/Harassing Behavior" complaint form which shall include the name of the reporting person, the specific nature and date of the misconduct, the name(s) of the victim(s) of the misconduct, the name(s) of any witness(es) and any other information that would assist in the investigation of the complaint. The report shall be given promptly to the principal or superintendent who shall institute an immediate investigation. Complaints against the principal shall be made to the superintendent, and complaints against the superintendent shall be made to the Board chairman. The complaint shall be investigated promptly. (HB 263-F)

C. Parents or guardians will be notified of the nature of any complaint involving their student. The District official will arrange such meetings as may be necessary with all concerned parties within five (5) working days after initial receipt of the complaint by the District. The parties will have an opportunity to submit evidence and a list of witnesses. All findings related to the complaint will be reduced to writing. The District official conducting the investigation shall notify the victim and parents as appropriate when the investigation is completed and a decision regarding disciplinary action, as warranted, is determined. (HB 263 - C)

D. If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the District official, he/she may submit a written appeal to the superintendent. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the results of the initial decision. The superintendent will arrange such meetings with the victim and other affected parties as deemed necessary to discuss the appeal. The superintendent shall provide a written decision to the victim's appeal within ten (10) working days.

E. If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the superintendent, a written appeal may be filed with the Board. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the decision of the superintendent. The Board shall, within twenty (20) working days, allow the victim and parents as appropriate to appear before the Board to present reasons for dissatisfaction with the decision of the superintendent. The Board shall provide a written decision within ten (10) working days following the victim's appearance before the Board.

F. If, after an investigation, a student is found to be a victim of bullying, such student shall not face disciplinary action on the basis of that student's use of "reasonable self-defense was in response to the bullying." (HB 263-G & 2).

G. If the victim of bullying is a student with disabilities, disciplinary action for the offender shall comply with the requirements of federal law including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 USCS Section 1400 et seq.) (HB 263-H).

The school district shall maintain and make available a list of counseling services to any student who is a victim of or a witness to bullying, or who engages in bullying. The following list of the types of counseling and support services are available to any victim of or a witness to bullying. This list is presented as a guide that by no means limits this school district from including other additional support services. (HB 263-E).

COUNSELING OPTIONS OFFERED BY THE DISTRICT MAY INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- School/District Counseling
- Conflict resolution training
- Anger Management training
- Problem solving skills training (proactive, constructive, relationship-building)
- Social skills training

Support may be provided by the school district through the assistance of the any of the following agencies:

- Mississippi Department of Education

- Mississippi Department of Health
- Mississippi Department of Human Services - Juvenile Services Department
- Community/Family Public or private community-based mental health services
- Faith-based services
- Law enforcement agencies

The procedures for reporting bullying shall also be posted on the district website. (HB 263-3).

Legal Reference: MS Code of 1972 37-11-67 and 37-11-69

TEACHER / STAFF IMPROVEMENT PLAN

All principals are responsible for monitoring the daily teaching and learning processes at their school site. Based on findings from walk-in or formal classroom observations, the principal may find it necessary to develop an improvement plan for a teacher or staff member who exhibit deficiencies. The plan of improvement should not be viewed as a form of punishment; rather it is designed to provide the teacher with professional development opportunities, mentoring, or other methodology to assist them in becoming more effective in the classroom. Failure of the teacher or staff member to successfully complete the plan may result in a non-renewal or termination of employment with the Forest Municipal School District. The principal/director shall file a copy of each improvement plan in the employee's personnel file. A copy shall also be forwarded to the superintendent's office.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS REQUEST

Parents/guardians have the right to request the qualifications of their child's teacher(s). Please contact the school principal to request this information. The Forest Municipal School District strives to employ teachers that meet the highly qualified status in the subject area or grade level that they are teaching. Parents are entitled to the following information:

1. Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
2. Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
3. The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field of discipline of the certification or degree; and
4. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

TEACHER/STAFF SELECTION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Equal Employment Opportunity: The Forest Municipal School District is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate or deny services on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, handicap and/or age.

Applications: All candidates for teaching positions or other positions within the Forest Municipal School District are required to submit an online application. The application must include at least three references from former employers or other persons knowledgeable of the applicant. Individuals filing for licensed positions must also include official college transcript(s), a brief biographical sketch, and a valid Mississippi Educator License with the appropriate endorsements.

Interviews: Candidates considered for district vacancies will be scheduled to appear for a pre-employment interview with the appropriate school administrator, interview committee, or the superintendent.

Salary: Salaries will be based upon the board approved district pay scale. Additional supplementary pay may be provided for designated extra-curricular activities, or other assigned duties.

Term of Contract: Contractual obligations including length of contract, general duties, salary, and method of payment are set forth in the contract. Employment contracts for licensed personnel shall be subject to yearly renewal upon satisfactory performance of all obligations and duties in accordance with applicable state laws.

ASSISTANT TEACHER AND PARAPROFESSIONALS

All assistant teachers and paraprofessionals are required to meet or exceed the qualifications as described in policy. Applicants must receive passing scores on Reading for Information, Applied Math, and Writing Components to be considered for employment, or have two years of college coursework (48 semester hours), or possess an Associate Degree from an accredited college.

TELEPHONE USE

Telephones are located in various convenient locations throughout the district and may be used for school business purposes only, except in the case of an emergency. **All faculty and staff are prohibited from using cellular telephones during instructional time, staff meetings, and state testing.** Staff members are prohibited from posting, liking, and sharing on personal social media websites during school hours. If an emergency arises, the teacher/staff must contact the office for permission to use a telephone in the classroom, or to make arrangements for the supervision of their students while they make the call outside the classroom. Under no circumstances are teachers or other district employees allowed to give any student access or permission to access any cellular phone. Any cell phone confiscated/received from a student MUST be turned in to the principal's office immediately. NO EXCEPTIONS.

TESTING / TRAINING / ADMINISTRATION (State-wide Testing)

All faculty members will attend test training as required by their principal. No personal leave will be granted during statewide test dates unless an emergency arises. In the event of an emergency during State Wide Testing, the teacher should make every effort to secure the test before leaving the classroom. The teacher should lock the door and be the first person to enter the room upon return. The district test coordinator is Tyresia Love. The test coordinator duties at each school location are the responsibility of the Assistant Principal or designee.

Absolutely no field trips including overnight trips, assemblies, or other student related events will be approved if scheduled for the night before or during any statewide testing dates at the school where testing is taking place. This includes CPAS2 State Assessments and/or National Certification Assessments administered at the Forest-Scott County Career & Technology Center.

TITLE I PARENT & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

I. Statement of Purpose

Forest Municipal School District is committed to the goal of providing quality education for each child within the district. To achieve this, we want to establish partnerships with parents and with the community. Our community, as a whole, benefits when the school and home collaborate to promote high academic achievements of all students. Neither home nor school can do the job alone. Parents play an extremely important role as the primary teacher of our children. Their support for their children and the school is critical to our children's success each step along the way. Forest Municipal School District intends to incorporate parents of those students who are eligible for participation in the Title I Program in the planning and implementation of the program. The goal is to achieve a school-home partnership that will help all students in the district to succeed.

II. Parental Involvement in Developing the Policy

An Advisory Board consisting of two parents, three teachers, two members of the community per school, principals, and the Title I Director/Superintendent designee will meet to develop the district's Parent Involvement Policy. The Advisory Board will be chosen from each school.

Special attention will be given to recruiting parents of children in the Title I Program. The goal is to have at least two parents whose children are participating in the Title I Program on the committee.

III. Annual Meeting for Title I Parents

At the annual meeting for parents, participants will be given information concerning Title I guidelines. They will be given copies of the district's current Parental & Family Engagement Policy, and will be offered a chance to become involved in revising that policy as needed. People may volunteer to serve on either the district-wide or individual school Advisory Board or both. Parents will be sent written notices about the meeting time and place and will also be contacted via School Status.

IV. School-Parent Compact

According to the new Title I regulations, each school must share responsibility with parents for high student performance by developing a school-parent-student compact jointly with the parents of children participating in the program. These compacts must outline how parents, staff, and students will share responsibility for promoting high student achievement. Parents on each school's Advisory Board will be involved in designing these compacts. Student

responsibilities may vary by grade level. Parents will receive the compact from their child's school with a checklist of responsibilities for teachers, parents, and students to help these students achieve their goals. Parents are urged to discuss the compact with their children before signing it and having their child sign.

V. Types of Parental Involvement

There are numerous ways for parents to become involved with their children's education. This school district recognizes the at-home contributions as well as the school and community participation. Reading to children at home and having conversations with them at a family meal are just as important as volunteering at school and serving on advisory boards. Many types of parental involvement are needed in school-home-community partnerships that will help all our children to succeed.

VI. Matching Programs to the Needs of Our Community

The school district will assess the needs of parents and children in this community on a yearly basis. This will be done in a variety of measures—including questionnaires sent home to parents—so that the Title I program will be tailored to meet those needs. Workshops and other programs will be available (some for parents and children) to match the expressed needs. Parents will be notified about these opportunities through the individual schools as well as the local newspaper. Parents may contact the Title I Office at any time to express an interest in a particular sort of workshop or to make suggestions.

VII. Staff-Parent Communication

Communication with parents will include notices and activity packets sent home with children. There will also be phone calls, conferences, and home visits as needed. Parents are encouraged to take the initiative to contact their child's teacher as soon as there is a problem (academic and/or discipline). They may also call the school office or counselor to arrange for a conference.

VIII. Evaluation

A district-wide Title I Advisory Board will be involved in the process of school review and improvement. Parents of children in the Title I program will be part of this group. The aim will be to evaluate the participating schools within the district by collecting information in various ways, including visits to the school and observation of classes.

There will be an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the Title I Parent Involvement Program, and parents will be asked for their input. The evaluation will include an assessment of how much parent involvement is increasing and what barriers still need to be overcome. The school district will revise its Parent & Family Engagement Policy on the basis of this review. This commitment to family involvement has been approved by the School Board of the Forest Municipal School District. The policy will be coordinated by Title I supervisory staff and teachers throughout the district and promoted by building principals and other school staff.

TRANSPORTATION REQUESTS

Transportation for students involved in approved school activities is generally available. Priority is given to transporting students to and from school. Requests for the school buses for extracurricular activities will be honored according to the availability of such. The sponsor requesting the transportation shall be responsible for the following:

1. All requests must be approved by the principal/director and signed by the superintendent five (5) days prior to the activity/trip.
2. An approved and properly licensed driver must be secured for the planned activity. Sponsoring organizations or clubs will be responsible for all driver fees.
3. All transportation vehicles must be returned to the school at the designated time.
4. All vehicles used for the activity/trip must be cleaned by the sponsoring group.

No transportation requests will be issued on the day prior to, or on the day of the planned activity/trip without the expressed approval of the Superintendent. All requests for extra-curricular or professional travel must be approved by the Superintendent prior to the activity. Faculty/staff shall not transport students to school activities in their own vehicles unless approved in advance by the superintendent.

TUTORING SERVICES

If funding is available, tutoring is provided at various levels throughout the school district to assist students with remediation needs. The school's tutoring labs are maintained by district personnel who can assist students with their individual learning needs. Students are generally referred for tutoring services by their academic teachers or principal, and attend tutoring sessions during their elective class periods when assigned. Priority will be given first to those students who score at the LEVEL 1 and LEVEL 2 on the State-Wide Test. Attendance for students in grades 2-8 referred for tutoring shall be mandatory.

Students in grades 7-8 may be assigned to an elective reading course under the following conditions:

1. Students who score at minimal or basic range on the statewide test will receive priority
2. Placement in reading shall also be at the teacher's request and principal's discretion

Computers and software are available at Forest High School to assist students with preparing for subject area tests, re-tests, and the ACT. Teachers throughout the district may also be available to provide voluntary tutoring in their classrooms before and after school.

VISITORS / DELIVERIES

All visitors to any school campus must sign in at the principal's office immediately upon arrival. To insure the safety of students and staff, a visitor's pass must be obtained on each and every visit. As a service to the faculty and staff, deliveries will be allowed for special occasions such as birthdays, anniversaries, etc.

WELLNESS POLICY

Policy Update Board Approved: October 9, 2023

The Forest Municipal School District on October 9, 2023, adopted The Local School Wellness Policy. This policy is to help combat childhood obesity and improve children's health. The ***Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (PL #108-265)*** requires each local educational agency that receives funding for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs to establish a local school wellness policy by the beginning of 2006-2007 school year.

With this new requirement, the U.S. Congress recognizes that schools play a critical role in creating a healthy environment for the prevention of childhood obesity and for combating problems, like Type 2 diabetes, that are associated with poor nutrition and physical inactivity. This law places the responsibility of developing a school wellness policy at the local level, so the individual needs of each school can be addressed most effectively.

The link between nutrition, physical activity, and learning is well documented. Healthy eating and activity patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Schools have a responsibility to help students learn, establish, and maintain lifelong, healthy eating and activity patterns. Planned and effectively implemented school nutrition and fitness programs have been shown to enhance students' overall health, as well as their behavior and academic achievement in school. Staff wellness also is an integral part of a healthy school environment, since school staff can be daily role models for healthy behaviors.

Goal: All students in the Forest Municipal School District shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious food choices and enjoyable physical activity choices for a lifetime. All staff employed by the Forest Municipal

School District are encouraged to model healthful eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life.

- To meet this goal, the Forest Municipal School District adopts this school wellness policy with the following commitments to nutrition, physical activity, comprehensive health education, marketing, and implementation. This policy is designed to effectively utilize school and community resources and to equitably serve the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences in culture.
- Establish guidelines for all foods available on the school campus during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity.
- Encourage all school-based organizations to use services, contests, non-food items, and/or healthful foods for fundraising programs. The sale of candy or other non-nutritious foods, such as doughnuts, is prohibited.
- Wellness newsletters will be sent out to students to carry home and share with their families. The newsletter will contain news regarding the nutrition, health, exercise, and wellness information.
- The FSA, wellness coordinator, and office staff will monitor and ensure no food is brought into the school from outside restaurants during the lunch hour unless permitted by the principal. Sack lunches should be brought from home, if desired, and packaged with home supplies (i.e., lunch boxes, paper sacks, etc.) No restaurant logo material or packaging will be allowed in the cafeterias.
- The Forest Municipal School District will have a healthy snack list approved by the wellness coordinator and principals for those students that receive daily snacks at school. The list will contain fruits, vegetables and three to five other healthy snack choices. Snacks of minimal nutritional value will not be allowed. Drink choices allowed will be water, milk, 100% fruit juice. No sodas will be allowed with snacks. Only approved healthy snacks will be brought in by students and/or parents to the school. Teachers will monitor this for their classroom. Exceptions to the healthy snack policy, excluding drinks, maybe used in instances of a holiday party, birthday, or celebration. Teachers are to encourage parents that healthy choices are still the best choice for parties, as well. Teachers are to oversee the policy for parties, special events, etc.
- Forest Municipal School District will host a health fair annually for students and teachers that will incorporate exercise and have a demonstration of types of physical activity and exercise.
- Forest Municipal School District will provide positive, motivating messages, both verbal and non-verbal, about healthy lifestyle practices throughout the school setting. All school personnel will help reinforce these positive messages.

Commitment to Nutrition

The Forest Municipal School District will:

- Offer a school lunch program with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.
- Offer school breakfast and snack programs (where approved and applicable) with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.
- Expect school staff to participate in school meal programs.
- Encourage families to participate in school meal programs.
- Operate all Child Nutrition Programs with school foodservice staff who are properly qualified according to current professional standards (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code EE-2E)
- Establish food safety as a key component of all school food operations and ensure that the food service permit is current for the Food Service school site.
- Follow State Board of Education policies on competitive foods and extra food sales (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code EEH).
- Establish guidelines for all foods available on the school campus during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity.
- Eliminate use of foods as rewards for student accomplishment (e.g., restricting a child's selection of flavored milk at mealtime due to behavior problems). See Appendix B for non-food rewards ideas.
- Encourage all school-based organizations to use services, contests, non-food items, and/or healthful foods for fundraising programs. The sale of candy as a fund-raiser is strongly discouraged. See Appendix C for alternative fundraising ideas.
- Provide adequate time for students to eat and enjoy school meals (a minimum of 15-20 minutes at breakfast and 18-25 minutes at lunch).
- Encourage students to make food choices based on the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

- Add nutritious and appealing options (such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, trail mix, reduced fat milk, reduced fat yogurt, 100% juice and water) whenever foods/beverages are sold or otherwise offered at school, including vending machines. See Appendix A for example of guidelines and options.
- Prohibit soft drinks in cafeteria.

Commitment to Physical Activity

The Forest Municipal School District will:

- Provide physical education for all students (In accordance with Section 37-13-134, Mississippi Code of 1972, ann., reference 2004 Mississippi Public Schools Accountability Standards 32, Appendix B and 33)
- Offer a planned sequential program of physical education instruction incorporating individual and group activities, which are student centered and taught in a positive environment.
- Implement the 2006 Mississippi Physical Education Framework.
- If possible schedule recess or physical education before lunch time in order to increase food consumed, decrease plate waste, and improve cafeteria behavior.
- Create wider opportunities for students to voluntarily participate in before and after school physical activity programs like intramurals, clubs, and the secondary level, interscholastic athletics.

Commitment to Comprehensive Health Education

The Forest Municipal School District will:

- Provide ½ Carnegie unit of comprehensive health education for graduation (2004 Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard 20, Appendix A)
- Implement the 2006 Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework for grades 9-12 (2004 Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard 20, Appendix A).
- Implement the nutrition strand of 2006 Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework.
- Emphasize the disease and prevention strand in the 2006 Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework.
- Participate in USDA nutrition programs such as Team Nutrition Schools and the Healthier US School Challenge. The school will conduct nutrition education activities and promotions that involve students, parents, and the community. The school team responsible for planning nutrition activities will include school foodservice staff, school nurses, health and PE teachers, coaches, and additional staff, as appropriate.

Commitment to Marketing a Healthy School Environment

The Forest Municipal School District

- Provide positive, motivating messages, both verbal and non-verbal, about healthy lifestyle practices throughout the school setting. All School personnel will help reinforce these positive messages.
- Involve students in planning for a healthy school environment. Students will be asked for input and feedback through the use of student surveys, and attention will be given to their comments.
- Promote healthful eating, physical activity, and healthy lifestyles to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the community at school events (e.g., school registration, parent-teacher conferences, PTA meetings, open houses, health fairs, teacher in-services, and other events.
- Work with local media, like newspaper, and radio, to inform the community about the health problems facing Mississippi children, as well as the need for and benefits of healthy school environments.

Commitment to Implementation

The Forest Municipal School District will

- Establish a plan for implementation of the school wellness policy.
- Designate one or more persons to insure that the school wellness policy is implemented as written.
- Establish and support a School Health Council (SHC) that addresses all aspects of a coordinated school health program, including a school wellness policy.
- Conduct a review of the progress toward school wellness policy goals each year to identify areas for improvement.
- Prepare and submit a yearly report to the school board regarding the progress toward implementation of the school wellness policy and recommendations for any revisions to the policy as necessary.

NOTE: A copy of the complete School Wellness Policy is available for viewing on the District's website.

Policy GBRIA: Family and Medical Leave Act**Status:** ADOPTED**Original Adopted Date:** 03/21/2011 | **Last Revised Date:** 09/11/2023**FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)****IMPORTANT NOTICE**

Due to the complexity of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and because it involves consideration of your district's leaves and absences policy and your practices, along with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) and parts of the Internal Revenue Code relating to group health plans and cafeteria plans, all federal anti-discrimination laws and applicable state laws, it is not practical to attempt development of a detailed policy for the administration of the FMLA. Each request for leave must be evaluated individually due to myriad combinations of circumstances and medical conditions one may have to consider. It is strongly recommended that the school district purchase a competent analysis of the rules, regulations and guidelines of the FMLA to review while evaluating individual requests for leave under FMLA. The school district's attorney should always be consulted when there is uncertainty.

Of particular importance are the posting and notice requirements of the Act. You must conspicuously post and keep posted in all schools and offices where employees are employed and where applications for employment are taken a notice explaining the Act's provisions and providing information concerning the procedures for filing complaints of violations of the Act with the Wage and Hour Division. Copies of the required notice may be obtained from any local Wage and Hour Division Office. No reproductions of the notice may be any smaller than 8 x 11 inches and the text must be fully legible. Failure to post the required notice prohibits you from taking any adverse action against an employee as well as liability for payment of fines to the Department of Labor (DOL).

Information concerning FMLA entitlements and employee obligations must be included in any employee handbook or other documents providing written guidance explaining all the obligations and rights of an eligible employee whenever that employee requests leave under FMLA. A fact sheet is available from the nearest Wage and Hour Division Office that will provide this guidance.

Also, you must provide an employee who has given you notice of the need for FMLA leave a notice of your specific expectations and employee obligations. Such notice must detail all consequences for failing to meet these obligations. This notice must include the following information as is appropriate to the leave request being considered:

1. Whether the district will require a medical certificate of a serious health condition or recertification and what will happen if the employee fails to do so;
2. Whether the district will require the employee to furnish, prior to being restored to employment, a fitness for duty certificate;
3. That the taking of this leave will count against the employee's annual FMLA leave entitlement;
4. That the employee has a right to substitute paid leave (sick leave, vacation, personal days) for FMLA leave or whether the district will require the substitution of paid leave and any conditions related to substitution;
5. Whether the employee is a "key employee" and that restoration might possibly be denied after taking FMLA leave, explaining the condition required for you to deny restoration;
6. Whether the employee will be required to pay any health insurance premiums to maintain benefits while on leave and the arrangements for making the payments;
7. That if the employee fails to return to work after taking unpaid FMLA leave, he is potentially liable for payment of health insurance premiums paid by the school district;
8. That the employee has a right to restoration to the same or equivalent job* upon return from leave.

The school district is also expected to act in good faith in answering questions from employees about their rights and responsibilities under the FMLA.

FMLA provides that the school district shall make, keep and preserve records pertaining to its obligations under the Act in accordance with the record keeping requirements of section 11 C of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and the FMLA. No particular order or form of records is required. No requirement exists that requires the school district to revise its computerized payroll or personnel records to comply; however, some items are required.

Leaves and Absences and The Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 (P.L. 103-3)

I. GENERAL

1. Definition

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

2. Leave Provisions

1. An eligible employee is entitled to 12 unpaid work weeks of leave during any 12 month period for any one or more of the following reasons:
 1. The birth of a son or daughter, and to care for the newborn child (within 12 months of the birth).
 2. The placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care (within 12 months of the placement).
 3. To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent with a serious health condition (not parent "in-law").
 4. Because of the employee's own serious health condition which makes the employee unable to perform the function of his/her job.
 5. Service Member Exigency Leave: For absences caused by an active duty exigency when the employee's spouse, child, or parent is a service member.
 6. Military Caregiver Leave: To care for the employee's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin (if the employee is the nearest blood relative) who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty.

IMPORTANT NOTE: The school district must choose any one of the following methods of determining the "12 month period". Once chosen, that method must be used consistently and

changed only upon 60 days written notice to all employees.

1. The calendar year;
2. Any fixed 12 month "leave year", that is,
 1. a fiscal year
 2. a year required by state law
 3. a year starting on the employee's employment anniversary date
 4. the 12 month period measured forward from the beginning date of the employee's FMLA leave
 5. a rolling 12 month period measured backward from the date the employee uses FMLA leave (may not extend back before August 5, 1993).*
2. Spouses have a 12 week aggregate leave limit except for personal illness or the illness of a child or the other spouse; that is, if each spouse took 6 weeks of leave for the birth of a child, each could later use an additional 6 weeks due to personal illness or to care for a sick child.
3. Brother and sister employees would have an aggregate limit of 12 weeks to care for their parent.
4. Special rules apply to this school district which allow it to require eligible instructional personnel only to take FMLA leave on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule, or to take leave near the end of a semester. Instructional employees are only those employees whose principal function is to teach and instruct students in a class, small group or individual setting. Instructional employees include teachers, teacher aides and assistant teachers who actually teach, coaches, driver's ed instructors and special ed assistants such as signers. All other eligible employees may request intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule to care for a family member or for the employee's own serious health condition.*

3. Notice Requirement

1. School district employees must provide this district at least 30 days advance notice before FMLA leave is to begin if the need for the leave is foreseeable based on an expected birth, placement for adoption or foster care or planned medical treatment for a serious health condition of the employee or family member.
2. Due to lack of knowledge or a medical emergency, notice must be given as soon as is practicable, which means as soon as both practical and possible or at least verbally within 1 or 2 working days when the need for leave becomes known to the employee (followed by written notice).*
3. Failure to give 30 days notice for foreseeable leave may result in the denial of the taking of FMLA leave until at least 30 days after the date the employee provides notice.*

REQUIRED CERTIFICATION

1. Eligible employees shall provide the superintendent certification of a serious health condition for his/her own serious health condition or that of a family member. The certification, to be signed by the health care provider,* shall be attached to the required written notice or submitted in a timely manner which shall be no more than three (3) working days after providing written notice. No leave period may begin without the approval of the superintendent. No approval shall be granted by the superintendent without the required written notice and certificate.
2. The certification is to include the following:
 1. The date on which the serious health condition in question began.
 2. The probable duration of the condition.
 3. Appropriate medical facts regarding the condition.
 4. A statement that the employee is needed to care for a spouse, parent or child (along with estimate of the time required) or that the employee is unable to perform his/her functions, and, in the case of intermittent leave, the duration of treatment to be given.
 5. Signature of health care provider.

3. The school district may require that a second opinion be obtained at the school district's expense. The second opinion may not be provided by a health care provider employed by this school district. In the event of conflicting opinions, the school district may pay for a third and final provider to offer a binding decision.
4. The school district may require subsequent written recertification on a reasonable basis.

III. EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS PROTECTION

1. An employee who completes a period of leave and has complied fully with the terms of this policy shall be returned either to the same position he/she had before the taking of leave or to a position which is genuinely equivalent (as compared to a comparable or similar job) in pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment.
2. Taking of leave shall not result in the loss of any previously accrued seniority or employment benefits. Except for health benefits, no other benefits will accrue during the leave period.
3. The school district may exempt from the restoration requirement above a key employee who is in the highest paid 10 percent of this district's workforce within a 75 mile radius of the school facility if restoring the key employee would cause substantial and grievous injury to the classroom and instructional program.*
4. The school district shall notify the key employee of its intent not to restore him/her at the time of the request for leave or when the determination is made. If the leave has begun, the key employee shall have the option of deciding whether or not to return to work after receiving the notice. An employee who is not restored shall be considered to be on leave for the duration of his/her leave period.*
5. Health benefits shall continue through an employee's leave period, even for key employees who have been notified that reinstatement will be denied. The school district shall recover health coverage premiums paid for an employee who fails to return from leave except as follows:
 1. No recovery will be made from a key employee who has chosen to take or continue leave after receiving notice of nonreinstatement.
 2. No recovery will be made from an employee who fails to return from leave if the reason is the continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition, or something else beyond the employee's control, all of which is subject to the certification requirement in Section II, above.

IV. PROHIBITED ACTS

This school district shall not interfere with or restrain an eligible employee's right to exercise the provisions of this policy.* This policy shall take effect and be in force from and after August 5, 1993. An employee's service prior to this effective date shall be counted in determining whether the employee is eligible for leave.

Other References

Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993

Description

Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993

Cross References

GBRI

[Absence From Duty](#)

GBRID

[Military Leave](#)

TEACHER JOB DESCRIPTION**TITLE:** Certified Teacher

- QUALIFICATIONS:**
1. Must possess at least a valid Class "A" Educator License issued by the Mississippi Department of Education. The Educator License must contain the proper endorsement area(s) necessary to teach the assigned class(s).
 2. Must have met all qualifications as established by the district and approved by the Forest Municipal School District Board of Trustees
 3. Such alternatives to the above qualifications as the Board of Trustees may find appropriate and acceptable.

REPORTS TO: Principal or other staff as designated by the Superintendent or Board of Trustees.**SUPERVISES:** Students and other staff as designated by the Principal, Superintendent, or Board of Trustees.**JOB GOAL:** To assist students in mastering subject area material and skills to a level of proficiency in accordance with the Mississippi Department of Education curriculum, statewide test objectives, and other local objectives if applicable.**JOB PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Meets and is fully prepared to supervise and instruct all assigned classes at the designated times and location.
2. Meets and is fully prepared to complete all assigned duties, including those associated with extracurricular activities.
3. Makes arrangements for being available to students and/or parents for education-related purposes outside the normal hours of the instructional day under reasonable terms; answers all correspondence, i.e. emails, letters, telephone calls, etc. in a timely and professional manner.
4. Attends and actively participates in all faculty meetings, team meetings, MTSS meetings, etc. and serves on school related committees as required by administration.
5. Creates and maintains a classroom environment that is safe, secure, and conducive to the teaching and learning process.
6. Takes all necessary and reasonable precautions to protect students, equipment, materials, and facilities; and supervises students at all times, especially during classroom experiments, demonstrations, videos, etc.
7. Consistently uses each and every class period to engage students in the teaching and learning process, and never uses a cellular telephone, Internet, or other inappropriate task for personal use during this time.
8. Prepares lesson plans and activities during the assigned planning period or other available time when students are not present in the classroom.
9. Maintains a program of study that meets or exceeds the individual needs, interests, and abilities of all students.
10. Develops and implements reasonable rules of classroom behavior and procedures; reviews and enforces all handbook policies with students on a regular basis, and maintains order at all times in a fair and consistent manner.
11. Provide instructions to enable all students to set and maintain appropriate standards of classroom behavior.
12. Prepares appropriately for all assigned classes, and provides written evidence (lesson plan, work samples, etc.) of preparation upon request of school administration.
13. Utilizes a variety of instructional methods and technology that are consistent with the physical limitations of the

location provided and the needs and capabilities of the individuals or student groups involved.

14. Guides the teaching and learning process toward the achievement of all curriculum goals, and establishes clear and concise lesson/project objectives to ensure effective communication and delivery of lessons to all students.
15. Strives to implement by instruction and action the district's philosophy of education, instructional goals, and objectives.
16. Continually assesses the accomplishments and progress of all students and provides progress reports as necessary.
17. Continually diagnoses and monitors student learning and behavioral deficiencies and provides classroom remediation interventions; and seeks the assistance of other teachers, administrators, and/or district specialists as necessary.
18. Maintains accurate, complete and correct records as required by state law, district policy, and administrative regulation.
19. Assists the administration in planning and implementing the rules, regulations, and policies that govern the school.
20. Successfully completes all district staff development activities and training.
21. Continually strives to maintain and improve professional competence.
22. Certified teachers are solely responsible for earning either CEU's or college credits toward maintaining a valid and up-to-date Mississippi Educator's License (the district cannot provide a contract of employment to certified teachers whose license has expired).
23. Perform all other duties and responsibilities as assigned by administration.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT: Salary, length of work year, sick leave, and personal leave to be established by the Forest Municipal School District Board of Trustees. Supplements may be added to employee's salary for performing additional duties as assigned by administration.

EVALUATION: Performance of this job will be evaluated in accordance with state and school board policy. All instructional personnel will be formally evaluated at least twice per year.

Reviewed and agreed to by: _____
Teacher Signature Date

Approved by: _____
Principal Signature Date

NOTE: This form must be signed at the beginning of each new school year. A copy of the signed form will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

TEACHER ASSISTANT JOB DESCRIPTION

TITLE: Teacher Assistant/Paraprofessional

- QUALIFICATIONS:**
1. Teacher Assistants and paraprofessionals are required to meet or exceed the qualifications as described in policy. Applicants must receive passing scores on Reading for Information, Applied Math, and Writing Components to be considered for employment, or have two years of college coursework (45 hours), or possess an Associate Degree from an accredited college.
 2. Must have met all qualifications as established by the district and approved by the Forest Municipal School District Board of Trustees
 3. Such alternatives to the above qualifications as the Board of Trustees may find appropriate and acceptable.

REPORTS TO: Principal or other staff as designated by the Superintendent or Board of Trustees.

SUPERVISES: Students and other staff as designated by the Principal, Superintendent, or Board of Trustees.

JOB GOAL: To assist the teacher in maintaining appropriate classroom activities and environment in order that students may learn effectively.

JOB PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Meets and is fully prepared to assist the teacher in all assigned classes at the designated times and locations.
2. Meets and is fully prepared to complete all duty assignments as required by administration.
3. Attends and actively participates in all faculty/staff meetings and professional development training as required by the administration.
4. Assists the teacher in maintaining a classroom environment that is safe, secure, and conducive to the teaching and learning process.
5. Takes all necessary and reasonable precautions to protect students, equipment, materials, and facilities; and assists the teacher in supervising students at all times, especially during class experiments, demonstrations, videos, etc.
6. Assists the teacher in planning and maintaining a program of study that meets or exceeds the individual needs, interests, and abilities of all students.
7. Assists the teacher in developing and implementing reasonable rules of classroom behavior and procedures; reviews and enforces all handbook policies with students on a regular basis, and maintains order at all times in a fair and consistent manner.
8. Assists the teacher in encouraging all students to set and maintain appropriate standards of classroom behavior.
9. Assists the teacher in maintaining accurate, complete and correct records as required by state law, district policy, and administrative regulation.
10. Assists the teacher in providing instructional assistance to individual students or small groups as necessary.
11. Assists the teacher and administration in planning and implementing the rules, regulations, and policies that govern the school.
12. Continually strives to maintain and improve professional competence.
13. Perform all other duties and responsibilities as assigned by administration.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT: Salary, length of work year, sick leave, and personal leave to be established by the Forest Municipal School District Board of Trustees. Supplements may be added to employee's salary for performing additional duties as assigned by administration.

EVALUATION: Performance of this job will be evaluated in accordance with state and school board policy.

Reviewed and agreed to by: _____
Teacher Assistant Signature Date

Approved by: _____
Principal Signature Date

NOTE: This form must be signed at the beginning of each new school year. A copy of the signed form will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

FOREST MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Faculty/Staff Agreement Form

Emergency Information (Please Print)

Employee's Name: _____ School/Department: _____

Address: _____
Street Address (No P.O. Box) City State Zip code

Phone: _____

Emergency Contact's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Faculty/Staff Handbook Agreement

My signature below indicates that I have received and read my copy of the Faculty/Staff Handbook as adopted by the Forest Municipal School District Board of Trustees. I agree that it is my responsibility to become familiar with the information contained in this handbook; and agree to follow to all policies and procedures outlined in this handbook, as well as follow all Forest Municipal School District approved policies [posted on the district website].

 Faculty/Staff Signature

 Date

Internet/Network Acceptable Use Policy Agreement

My signature below indicates that I have read the Forest Municipal School District Acceptable Use Policy. I agree to follow all the rules contained in the policy in exchange for the right to access the district network. If I fail to follow the policy, I understand that my access to the network will be terminated permanently. As a user of the Forest Municipal School District's computer network, I hereby agree to comply with all policy rules and all relevant laws and restrictions while communicating over the network.

 Faculty/Staff Signature

 Date

Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct Agreement (If Applicable)

My signature below indicates that I have read the **Mississippi Educator Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct** and agree that I must follow all principles as defined in the agreement.

 Faculty/Staff Signature

 Date

THIS SIGNED FORM MUST BE RETURNED TO YOUR PRINCIPAL/DIRECTOR AND KEPT ON FILE IN THE SCHOOL OFFICE.

FAILURE TO RETURN THIS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT WILL NOT RELIEVE A STAFF MEMBER FROM RESPONSIBILITY FOR KNOWLEDGE OR NON-COMPLIANCE OF THE CONTENTS OF THIS HANDBOOK.

FOREST MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

**OATH OF CONFIDENTIALITY AND
NON-DISCLOSURE OF RELEASE INFORMATION**

I understand that the data maintained by the Student Administration Manager (SAM) is sensitive and confidential. I acknowledge the access to and release of SAM information is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and Sections 37-15-1, et. seq. of the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, as amended. I further acknowledge that this data may only be accessed and used for legitimate educational interests and is sensitive, confidential, and not subject to disclosure.

I agree that I shall not release SAM data unless authorized to do so according to applicable laws, rules and regulations, neither shall I access and use the information contained therein except for legitimate educational interests.

I acknowledge that I fully understand that the release by me of this information to any unauthorized person could subject me to disciplinary action including termination and/or criminal and civil penalties imposed by law.

SIGNATURE: _____

PRINTED NAME: _____

TITLE: _____

LOCATION: _____

DATE: _____

Operating an Electronic Device While Driving on District Business

No employee or volunteer driver of the Forest Municipal School District shall operate any district motor vehicle or operate a personal motor vehicle in the course of their responsibilities and duties with the district while writing, sending, or reading a text message and from accessing, reading or posting to a social networking site using a hand-held mobile telephone.

Definitions

- "Hand-held mobile telephone" means a mobile telephone or other portable electronic communication device with which a user engages in a call or writes, sends, or reads a message using at least one hand. The term "Hand-held mobile telephone" shall not include a voice-operated or hands-free device;
- "Motor vehicle" means a vehicle driven or drawn by mechanical power and manufactured primarily for use on public highways;
- "Social networking site" means any web-based service that allows individuals to construct a profile within a founded system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and communicate with other users of the site;
- "Text message" includes a text-based message, instant message, electronic message, email, but shall not include an emergency, traffic, or weather alert or a message related to the operation or navigation of the motor vehicle;
- "Writing," "sending," and "reading," with respect to a text message, means the manual entry, sending, or retrieval of a text message, respectively, to communicate with any person or device;
- "Voice operated or hands-free device" means a device that allows the user to write, send, or listen to a message without the use of either hand except to activate, deactivate, or initiate a feature or function.

Violations

Violations of this policy may lead to disciplinary action including denial of use of school vehicles and district cell phones and up to and including termination. Certain violations are punishable by law. Any fines or penalties incurred shall be the responsibility of the employee.

Statement of Acknowledgement

Please read and sign the Statement of Acknowledgement and return it to your supervisor. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please contact your supervisor.

I am aware of the policy regarding the use of hand-held wireless communication devices while operating a district vehicle or a personal vehicle in the course of my responsibilities and duties with the district. I fully understand the terms of this policy and agree to abide by them.

Employee Signature: _____ Date: _____

Employee Name: _____
Print Name

NOTE: All personnel who operate a district owned vehicle must sign this form.