

SOUTH PANOLA SCHOOL DISTRICT



Providing Opportunities for Educational Excellence

SOUTH PANOLA SCHOOL DISTRICT 2026 - 2027 STAFF HANDBOOK

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Making a Difference with Purpose, Passion, and Pride



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BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent	Dr. Del Phillips
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South Panola High School Principal	David Odom
Career and Technical Education Director	Trea Higdon
Athletics Director & South Panola High School Assistant Principal	Jarrold Corlew
South Panola High School Assistant Principal	Valencia Bilbro
South Panola High School Assistant Principal	Denise Pope
South Panola High School 9th Grade Principal/District Dropout Prevention	Dr. Lance Reed
Director of Alternative School	Marcus Autry
Batesville Junior High School Principal	Lorenzo L. Grimes
Batesville Junior High School Assistant Principal	Ashley Martin
Batesville Junior High School Assistant Principal	Matthew Wolfenbarger
Batesville Junior High School Assistant Principal	Dr. Valerie Williams
Pope School Principal	Stephen Beebe
Pope School Assistant Principal	Artee Smith
Batesville Middle School Principal	Stephanie Miles
Batesville Middle School Assistant Principal	Gerald Johnson
Batesville Intermediate School Principal	Heather Cobb
Batesville Intermediate School Assistant Principal	David Baker
Batesville Elementary School Principal	Dr. Amy Sutton
Batesville Elementary School Assistant Principal	Dr. Jemmye Helms

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY/MISSION STATEMENT

The primary purpose of South Panola School District is to provide opportunities for educational excellence for all students and provide the greatest possible development of each individual within the framework of our democratic society.

We believe that the purpose of education is to provide all students with the basic skills, habits, values and attitudes necessary to exercise their civic responsibilities more effectively in our democratic society; to increase their economic potential in industry, the professions, or other vocational endeavors; and to improve the quality of life available to them. We strive to provide a variety of teaching methods, so each child might develop a healthy self-concept and be prepared to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

To accomplish the above, the district sets forth these objectives:

- To provide a safe, orderly environment conducive to teaching and learning.
- To recognize and serve individual intellectual differences.
- To guide each child in developing skills and attitudes conducive to self-fulfillment and social responsibility.
- To cultivate moral and ethical values by teaching courtesy, cooperation, fairness, honesty and good citizenship.
- To promote the democratic way of life and its responsibilities in the home, school and community.
- To emphasize the importance of physical development through personal health, hygiene and self-discipline.

PERSONNEL

MISSISSIPPI EDUCATOR CODE OF ETHICS AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

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:

1. Encouraging and supporting colleagues in developing and maintaining high standards
2. Respecting fellow educators and participating in the development of a professional teaching environment
3. Engaging in a variety of individual and collaborative learning experiences essential to professional development designed to promote student learning

4. Providing professional education services in a non discriminatory manner
5. Maintaining competence regarding skills, knowledge, and dispositions relating to his/her organizational position, subject matter and pedagogical practices
6. 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:

1. Harassment of colleagues
2. Misuse or mismanagement of tests or test materials
3. Inappropriate language on school grounds or any school-related activity
4. Physical altercations
5. 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:

1. Properly representing facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression
2. Advocating for fair and equitable opportunities for all children
3. Embodying for students the characteristics of honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness

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

1. Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting any of the following: employment history, professional qualifications, criminal history, certification/recertification information submitted to local, state, federal, and/or other governmental agencies information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel reasons for absences or leave information submitted in the course of an official inquiry or investigation
2. Falsifying records or directing or coercing others to do so

VIOLATIONS OF STANDARDS 3 AND/OR 4 MUST BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO THE MS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

STANDARD 3: UNLAWFUL ACTS

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

1. 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 a 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:

1. 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
2. Nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social and civic potential of all students
3. Providing an environment that does not needlessly expose students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement
4. Creating, supporting, and maintaining a challenging learning environment for all students

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

1. Committing any act of child abuse
2. Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment
3. Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act
4. Engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion or disability
5. Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs
6. Soliciting, encouraging, participating or initiating inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, physical or romantic relationships 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:

1. Revealing confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law
2. Harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system
3. Interfering with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities
4. Discriminating against or coercing a colleague on the basis of race, religion, national origin, age, sex, disability or family status
5. 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:

1. 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:

1. Being under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs
2. 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.
3. 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:

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

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

1. Knowingly misappropriating, diverting or using funds, personnel, property or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain
2. Failing to account for funds collected from students, parents or any school-related function
3. Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay
4. Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts
5. 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:

1. Insuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain
2. 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:

1. 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. Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local school board
2. 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:

1. 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
2. Maintaining diligently the security of standardized test supplies and resources

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

1. 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

2. 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
3. Violating other confidentiality agreements required by state or local police

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:

1. Abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the school board
2. Refusing to perform services required by the contract

SOCIAL MEDIA USE

Access of social networking websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited. Employees, faculty, and staff of the South Panola School District should not give social networking website passwords to students.

All employees, faculty, and staff of South Panola School District who participate in social networking websites shall not post any data, documents, photos or inappropriate information on any website or application that might result in a disruption of classroom activity. This determination will be made by the Superintendent.

Fraternization via the internet between employees, faculty, or staff and students is prohibited and violation of any of these policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Nothing in this policy prohibits employees, faculty, staff, or students from the use of educational websites, since educational sites are used solely for educational purposes.

It is the responsibility of the employee to understand and control privacy settings on each social network use. The employee should assume default settings will make their profile and any content they share publicly accessible. Employees should understand that even with maximum privacy settings in place, content may still find its way in to the public domain.

DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHERS

1. The primary duty of the teacher is to teach the basic skills along with guidance, discipline, safety, and hygiene of students. The teacher's responsibility to students is not confined to classrooms, but extends to school corridors, restrooms, playgrounds, and on excursions away from school premises.
2. Teachers shall strive at all times to maintain cordial relationships with the home and parent.
3. Teachers shall strive to keep parents duly informed of the child's progress and hold conferences with parents when necessary.
4. Teachers shall strive to interpret the work of the school fairly, honestly, and adequately to patrons at every opportunity.
5. Teachers should guide the school activities of the student in the classrooms and in extracurricular experiences so that the students have every opportunity to practice good citizenship.
6. Teachers shall strive to cooperate with other faculty members and school employees toward school improvement in plans and policies and the proper execution of regulations or policies.
7. Teachers shall keep an outline of class procedures. This outline will aid principals in performing their duties and also serve as a guide for substitute teachers.
8. Teachers shall attend all faculty meetings called by the principal, or superintendent, before, during, or after school unless excused by the person calling the meeting prior to the time of the meeting.
9. When teachers receive homeroom assignments, they shall handle all details of records, attendance, activities, and other matters assumed by the homeroom.
10. In addition to teaching, each teacher is subject to a portion of the miscellaneous services and activities assigned by the principal, such as preparation of programs, extracurricular activities, exhibition of work, supervision of halls and lunchrooms, committee activity and teacher supervision.
11. Teachers shall keep their classes in session each day during school hours and shall not dismiss them for any time without the consent of the principal.
12. Teachers shall not be absent from school without notifying the principal.
13. Teachers shall be responsible for all equipment and school property entrusted to them.
14. Teachers shall be responsible for the deportment of all pupils.
15. Teachers are expected to give reasonable assistance to pupils in making up their work when they have been absent due to illness or for other unavoidable causes.
16. Teachers shall give careful attention to the health of the pupils under their care and immediately report all unsatisfactory conditions to the principals.
17. Teachers shall prepare all reports and records according to their rules and regulations as required by the principal or superintendent.
18. Teachers may be required to report for duty before the actual opening of school for workshops, staff development, or other purposes.
19. Teachers shall be held strictly accountable to the administration for the performance of their duties.

20. Teachers shall make any and all requests through the principal.
21. Teachers shall not make money collections from any child without the consent of the principal.
22. Teachers shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the principal.

Classroom teachers will maintain an up-to-date substitute file containing the lesson plan book, class roll, schedule, current duty assignment and any other pertinent information needed to aid substitutes with their duties. This file will be placed in the teacher's desk at the end of each school day.

TEACHER ASSISTANTS

1. Assistant teachers are paraprofessionals who work under the supervision of the classroom teacher to whom they are assigned. However, assistant teachers are ultimately responsible to the school principal and in no case shall the assistant teacher discharge duties assigned by the classroom teacher, which are in conflict with administrative policies, procedures, or requests.
2. Assistant teachers are not to administer or prescribe punishment to students. Misbehavior should be reported to the teacher or principal.
3. Assistant teachers are not responsible for planning a program of study for students.
4. Assistant teachers are to conform to the standards set for teachers in the areas of ethics, dress, etc.
5. Assistant teachers should feel free to discuss with their principal any problems they might have in regard to their employment.

RE-CERTIFICATION

Renewal of Educator License is the responsibility of the certified employee. As CEUs and college credits are earned, an electronic record should be created online with the MS Department of Education Licensure System (ELMS). These entries should be made based on the receipt of certificates or transcript. When all requirements are completed and posted on the MDE site, the educator will forward all original certificates and official sealed transcripts along with the one (1) page Licensure Application to MDE, Office of Licensure for completion and verification. The license may be renewed for one five-year period beyond the present expiration date. Only credits earned during the renewal cycle dates may be used.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

1. All certified staff members will be required to successfully complete required local professional development.
2. All support staff are required to complete the staff development activities planned for their school.
3. All other classified personnel will be required to complete staff development as prescribed. 10

SAFETY

Teachers and other school staff must take all possible steps to assure the safety of students at school. The room environment, campus, and students activities must be in harmony with the requirements of safety. Staff members must use sound judgment in determining what types of games and other activities will be allowed.

Each teacher will be presented with an SPSD Crisis Management Plan. The teacher should be familiar with the plan and its actions should the need to be implemented arise.

LIABILITY

The effective staff member is concerned for the safety and welfare of students at all times. Failure by staff to meet responsibilities may have severe consequences.

Specifically staff must do the following:

1. Never leave students unsupervised.
2. Require students to conduct themselves in an orderly, safe manner, and administer such disciplinary actions reasonable and proper in any situation involving student misconduct.
3. Report any unsafe condition on campus to the principal so that it may be corrected.
4. Strictly adhere to all stated policy of the district and of the individual school.

SECURITY

I.D. Badges - Employees of the district are to wear I.D. badges at all times while on school property.

Resource Officer Program - This program is an effort between the South Panola School District, the Batesville Police Department, and Panola County Sheriff to enhance safety and educational opportunities for students and employees of South Panola School District. Resource Officers will work cooperatively with school administration to assist with problems of law enforcement or crime prevention nature. Resource Officers will abide by the Standard Operating Procedures of the Agency represented and will follow the handbook of the South Panola School District. The principal of the building will supervise all aspects of the school site; the Resource Officer will enforce the law. Video surveillance is provided in some schools and some school buses.

ACCIDENTS (STAFF)

The South Panola School District is covered under the Workers' Compensation Law. All employees are afforded coverage for work-related accidents without using their health insurance.

Any employee who plans to see a doctor with an injury from a work-related accident must follow these steps:

1. Employee will notify building supervisor or safety committee member immediately.
2. Building supervisor or safety committee member will complete a Supervisor's Accident Investigation Report. One copy of the report should be sent to the central office and the other copy kept on file.
3. Injured employee must complete a Workers' Compensation Claim Form – First report of Injury or Illness is due within three (3) days of accident or injury.

ACCIDENTS (STUDENTS)

Safety of students is paramount. Teachers are responsible for the safety of all students under their supervision. Any injuries suffered by students while they are the responsibility of the school must be given immediate attention.

The following is provided for general guidance and may be modified as the situation demands:

1. Remain calm and promptly decide actions to prevent worsening of the situation.
2. Act decisively - take charge.
3. Notify the office for help.
4. Administer first aid if it is indicated and if you are knowledgeable.
5. Resume normal activities as soon as feasible.
6. Complete accident report before the end of the school day and send a copy to the district office.

ILLNESSES

Send the student to the office with a pass if the student's condition so indicates. Even if you believe a student is feigning illness, it is still better practice to treat the situation as though the student were sick.

ATTENDANCE (STAFF)

1. Teachers are to report as scheduled by the principal and follow arrival procedures as designated.
2. If a teacher is to be absent due to illness, the principal or person designated by the principal should be notified as soon as possible. Principals may require a doctor's statement.
3. If a teacher is requesting personal leave, it should be done at least three days in advance (except in cases of emergency) and the principal must give prior approval.
4. If a teacher is to be late for any reason, the principal's office should be contacted as soon as possible so arrangements can be made until the teacher's arrival. Teachers who sign in after the scheduled time or have problems relative to timely arrival for scheduled duties shall on that day provide the office with a written, dated explanation of the reason for failure to arrive on time.
5. Although sick and personal days are provided, there is great incentive for not exhausting those days each year. Unused days add up for retirement purposes.

DELAYED SCHOOL OPENING PROCEDURES

1 Hour Delay

Buses run their normal routes, beginning one hour later than usual. Parents should anticipate that their children will board the bus an hour later than they normally do. This may vary given the weather conditions and logistical issues.

2 Hour Delay

Buses run their normal routes, beginning two hours later than usual. Parents should anticipate that their children will board the bus 2 hours later than they normally do. This may vary given the weather conditions and other logistical issues.

CLUB/FIELD TRIPS

All participants in clubs making out of town trips must show proof of personal health insurance. Also, please inform the cafeteria staff two weeks in advance of these trips, and let them know if sack lunches can be prepared for your trip. Students are to comply with the rules of the school while on a trip.

1. The driver will be paid \$12 per hour, including waiting time, except on overnight trips.
2. On overnight trips, the driver will be paid \$12.00 per hour for driving. Room and meals will be provided by the organization requesting the trip. No driver is to be paid in cash.
3. Clubs will have a list of students on the bus and leave a list in the principal's office.
4. At least one certified teacher must be on the bus.

Note: All out-of-district trips, especially those in which students are involved, must be approved by the Superintendent and School Board prior to the trip.

CONFERENCES

Conferences in the South Panola School District are encouraged and can be divided into three major categories as listed below:

Principal-Teacher: Such conferences will be held at the discretion of the principal or upon the request of the teacher. Records of all principal - teacher conferences shall be kept by the principal.

Teacher-Parent: Since it has been proven that frequent teacher-parent communication opens many doors and creates a well rounded educational atmosphere, it is the teacher's responsibility to take the initiative in setting up a parent conference at the first sign of a student's deviation from the norm. The procedures and time for scheduling these conferences will be determined by the principal. Prior notice to the teacher will be given when possible.

Teacher-Student: A teacher who has frequent and direct communication with his/her students will find the profits to be overwhelming in the areas of student behavior and progress.

The principal or assistant principal will be present at any teacher-parent, or teacher-student conference if such presence is requested and the administrator is given sufficient advance notice.

RELATIONSHIPS

Teacher-Principal: Relationships are direct and frequent. Exchanges of ideas in any area (curriculum, discipline, instruction, facilities, services, etc.) are encouraged and appreciated. Democratic practices are the goal. The principal, through class visitation and other contacts, assists the teacher in every possible way to ensure the most effective learning for each student. The teacher and principal continuously keep each other informed. In dealing with the office of the superintendent, the proper channel is through the principal.

Principal-Student: The principal is the final authority in matters pertaining to students. For this reason, teachers must do most preliminary work in the realm of problem-solving before the principal can act. Each student request or problem should be treated with respect and as being important to the student.

Teacher-Parent: Teachers have the responsibility and authority to discuss an individual student's problems directly with the student's parents. You may do so directly, keeping the principal informed beforehand as to the problem and afterward, as to the result. To know the parent is to know the child better. Consult the principal when you are not sure. Teachers shall not discuss student performance with anyone other than the student, his parent, or with legitimate authorized personnel. Report all evidence of child abuse to your principal. Use the Mississippi Department of Human Services reporting form to report all suspected cases of child neglect or abuse.

Teacher-Teacher: Cooperate directly on matters of mutual concern and interest. Discussions concerning student or faculty problems must be private, professional, and of a constructive nature. Keep the principal informed.

Teacher-Administrator: Deal directly with any member of the school administrative staff. Bring problem areas in this regard to the principal's attention. The administrative staff coordinates, supports, and supervises the entire operation of the school.

Teacher-Superintendent: Teachers should feel free to discuss matters concerning their employment and other concerns with the superintendent. They should, however, notify their principal of their intentions unless the matter is of a personal or private nature.

Teacher-Board: Teachers shall make all requests to the Board through the principal and superintendent.

Principal-Board: Principals shall make all requests to the Board through the superintendent.

CURRICULUM

The Mississippi State Curriculum Frameworks have been adopted by the South Panola School Board as the basic curriculum of South Panola School District, and curriculum development has been established as priority for the district. Mississippi accreditation standards require a minimum of 330 minutes of instruction per day. The district utilizes the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards as guided by MDE.

DRESS

Staff members must dress professionally and reflect credit upon themselves and the teaching profession. Teachers should not wear shorts unless teaching in a non-air-conditioned facility. Students shall adhere to the policy in the individual school handbook, and **teachers should meet or surpass the required dress code for students. *Principals may implement additional standards for professional dress for all staff at their building.* Principals will deal with infractions personally and professionally.**

DRUG POLICY FOR EMPLOYEES

It is hereby declared to be the policy of the South Panola School District that the use, possession, distribution, dispensing or sale of any narcotic drugs, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, or any other controlled substance, as defined under state or federal law, on or about the campuses of any school ground, any school building or school premises, any school-owned vehicle or any other approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities, or on or off school property at any school sponsored

or school approved activity, function or event, shall be considered sufficient misconduct on the part of any employee of the South Panola School District for the suspension and/or termination of such employee from the South Panola School District. **Note: No person will be permitted to use any tobacco product within any school building, bus, school campus, grounds, athletic field, or any property owned, used or operated by SPSD.**

This policy applies to medical cannabis. Under the Mississippi Medical Cannabis Act, the South Panola School District:

1. Is not required to permit, accommodate, or allow the medical use of medical cannabis, or to modify any job or working conditions of any employee who engages in the medical use of medical cannabis or who for any reason seeks to engage in the medical use of medical cannabis.
2. May discharge, discipline, refuse to hire or otherwise take an adverse employment action against an individual with respect to hiring, discharging, tenure, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment as a result, in whole or in part, of that individual's use of medical cannabis, regardless of the individual's impairment or lack of impairment resulting from the medical use of medical cannabis.
3. Does not allow the use of medical cannabis by employees while on district property, while at a district sponsored event, or while performing district business.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

PHILOSOPHY OF PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Professional staff evaluation is a necessary component for improving performance. The establishment, monitoring, and evaluation of standards of behavior and performance should be related to professional growth and student outcomes. Effective evaluation results from deliberate planning, training, application, and review.

Further, it should identify areas of strengths and weaknesses, improve communication, and develop priorities for improvement. Assistance to promote professional growth should be provided when necessary. Professional evaluation should improve the delivery of services to students. The process should be a continuous, constructive, and cooperative endeavor.

SPSD TEACHER EVALUATION PROCEDURE

I. Orientation of Teachers

- A. Review procedures and guidelines.
- B. Disseminate copies of teacher evaluation operational procedures.

II. Administrative Procedures

- A. All certified staff in the South Panola School District shall be informally evaluated a minimum of two times each year and a minimum of one scheduled formal evaluation per year utilizing the Professional Growth System instrument as prescribed by the Mississippi Department of Education.

B. It shall be the responsibility of the evaluator to confer, discuss, and share with the evaluatee information regarding the evaluation.

III. Evaluation Records

A. The original copy of the evaluation results will be maintained by the evaluator and copies provided to the evaluatee. A copy of the evaluation results will be placed in the employee's permanent personnel file.

B. Both the evaluator and evaluatee shall sign in the space provided on the Teacher Evaluation Report following completion of the process. The evaluatee's signature will not imply agreement, but will indicate knowledge that the process has been carried out and that a copy of the results has been provided.

C. If the evaluator and evaluatee disagree on the performance scores, the evaluatee can request a second formal evaluation be conducted using an approved outside evaluator. For this second evaluation to occur, the evaluatee must request the additional evaluation within 5 working days of the original disclosure of performance scores.

PLANNING PERIOD

Each teacher will be assigned a planning period during the day (Elementary and secondary teachers - 150 minutes per week). This is not a "free period," and is not to be used as such.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Outside employment shall not be permitted to jeopardize the effective performance of an employee or make it in any way difficult to adequately perform his/her duties or carry out his/her responsibilities. Any outside employment should be of the type which is not inconsistent with the moral and ethical aspects of teaching children, as stated in school board policies and regulations.

Any employee engaged in outside employment shall immediately furnish to the principal and superintendent a description of the outside employment. If outside employment is deemed incompatible with the preceding principle, the employee will be given a choice of resigning from the outside employment or having his/her contract terminated.

PARTIES

Parties at school may be held only with prior approval of the principal.

RESOURCE PERSONS

Well-planned use of resource persons makes a valuable contribution to the educational program. Teachers are encouraged to arrange for such persons to discuss appropriate topics with students. The principal must approve all volunteers and resource persons and topics before invitation.

SCHOOL SPOKESPERSON

The district is committed to providing up-to-date information about the district and its activities in a timely and appropriate manner. The school board designates the Superintendent, Board President, or Public Information Director as the spokesperson for the district when the media requests information. The school board further designates coaches and sponsors of sports teams and extracurricular activities as spokespersons for the district when the media requests information about those teams or activities. No employee may provide information on behalf of the school district or any school within the South Panola School District without prior approval from the superintendent or principal (if school related).

STUDENT INTERNS

Student teachers will be assigned to a supervising teacher who will be charged with the development of the student teacher's skills and with the proper utilization of the student teacher. Student teachers and interns will abide by all policies of the South Panola School District.

SUBSTITUTE EMPLOYEES

1. Regular attendance of the classroom teacher is imperative to a good learning atmosphere. When the teacher must be absent, it is the responsibility of the principal to obtain a substitute. The principal or designee shall be notified immediately upon the teacher's anticipated absence.
2. Classroom teachers shall not contact a substitute teacher.
3. Classroom teachers will maintain an up-to-date substitute file containing the lesson plan book, class roll, schedule, current duty assignment, and any other pertinent information needed to aid substitutes with their duties. This file will be placed in the teacher's desk at the end of each school day.

TEXTBOOKS

1. Textbooks shall be issued to the teacher/students by the school librarian.
2. At the end of the session, upon transferring to another school, or at any other time ordered by the principal, all books shall be returned by the pupil to the library.

3. If, at any time, the pupil loses a book or damages the book to the extent it is no longer usable, he/she shall be charged a replacement fee. The fee shall be based on the average usage of the book. The following scale will be used to assess fines:
 - a. Books used less than 1 complete year - full price
 - b. Books used 2-4 years - $\frac{3}{4}$ full price
 - c. Books used 5-7 years - $\frac{1}{2}$ full price
 - d. Books used 8 or more years - $\frac{1}{4}$ full price
4. A fine will be assessed to any student who abuses the use of a textbook. The amount of the fine will be determined by the extent of damage to the book.

TUTORING

To assure all students reasonable assistance without charge from their own teachers/assistants and to avoid placing a teacher/assistant in a position where he/she may have a conflict of interest, teachers/assistants shall receive no money for tutoring any student they have in class or upon whose evaluation or assignment they will be called upon to make. Further, no tutoring for which a teacher or assistant receives a fee will be carried on in the school building.

WORKBOOKS

Fee Policy

This school board authorizes the charge of reasonable fees not to exceed the actual cost for the following:

1. Supplemental instructional materials and supplies, excluding textbooks.
2. Other fees designated by the school board as fees related to a valid curriculum educational objective, including transportation.
3. Extracurricular activities and any other educational activities of the school district which are not designated by the school board as valid curriculum educational objectives such as band trips and athletics.
4. All fees authorized under this policy, except those fees authorized under subsection (3) of this policy, shall be charged only upon condition that a financial hardship waiver may be granted upon request.

FINANCIAL HARDSHIP WAIVER POLICY

All fees authorized to be charged under subsections (1) and (2) of the Fee Policy above shall be charged only upon the following conditions:

1. Applications for hardship waivers shall be kept in the strictest of confidence with all files and personal disclosures restricted from review by the general public.

2. Pupils eligible to have any such fee waived as a result of an inability to pay for said fees, shall not be discriminated against nor shall there be any overt identification of any pupil who has received a financial hardship waiver by use of special tokens or tickets, announcements, posting or publication of names, physical separation, choice of materials or by any other means.
3. In no case shall any of this school district's procedures expose any pupil receiving a hardship waiver to any stigma or ridicule by other pupils or school district personnel.
4. The confidentiality provisions of this policy shall apply to any students who have an inability to pay any fees authorized under the Fee Policy above.

In no case shall the inability to pay the assessment of fees authorized under the provisions of the Fee Policy above result in a pupil being denied or deprived of any academic awards or standards, any class selection, grade, diploma, transcript, or the right to participate in any activity related to educational advancement. The superintendent shall establish administrative procedures consistent with this policy for its implementation and duplicate the attached form for use by applicants.

CUMULATIVE RECORDS: PREPARATION AND USAGE

PERSONAL AND FAMILY DATA

1. Name - Should be printed clearly or typed. (Copy from birth certificate if possible).
2. Race - Record "W" White, "B" Black, "A" for Asian, "AI" for American Indian, "H" for Hispanic and "O" for Other races.
3. Sex - Record "M" for Male, "F" for Female.
4. Place of Birth - Record city or rural post office, county and state.
5. Birth Certificate Number - Record and properly identify all numbers (such as State No., State File No., and Registrar Number) found on certificate. If a valid certificate is not numbered, specify and give any identifying information on the certificate.
6. Date of Birth - Record month, day, and year indicated on birth certificate in this sequence with verifying initials in the appropriate space provided.
7. Social Security Number
8. Mailing Address, 911 Address and Phone Number - Pencil should be used to keep this section up-to-date. Check at the beginning of school and change each time the child moves during the year.
9. Father, mother, or guardian must provide legal documentation - Give full name of father, mother (maiden name), stepfather, stepmother, or guardian. For pupils under legal guardianship, enter names of parents if considered helpful; indicate, however, that the guardian is the person with whom the school has contact.

ENTRANCE RECORD

1. Date - Indicate month by Batesville, Mississippi. For transfers within the district, repeat above except South Panola School District and Batesville, Mississippi, may be entered by ditto marks. At the beginning of each school year, do not duplicate these entries unless the pupil was permanently withdrawn prior to completion of the previous school year. In such cases a record of permanent withdrawal would be indicated elsewhere on the cumulative record. If additional space is needed in this area, cut an unused record and staple directly over this filled section.
2. Grade - Indicate grade in which the pupil is placed.
3. Name and address of school - For pupils entering school for the first time, enter the name of the school, followed by Batesville, Mississippi. For transfers within the district, repeat above except South Panola School District and Batesville, Mississippi, may be entered by ditto marks. At the beginning of each school year, do not duplicate these entries unless the pupil was permanently withdrawn prior to completion of the previous school year. In such cases a record of permanent withdrawal would be indicated elsewhere on the cumulative record. If additional space is needed in this area, cut an unused record and staple directly over this filled section.
4. Transfer - Withdrawal Record - The appropriate date should be placed in the proper blank showing transfer or withdrawal. Also write the name of the school district or state to which the child is transferring, if known.
5. Immunization Records are to be current and on file, day and year, in that order and with slanted lines for separation for entry date in your school.

Before enrolling a student, principals must ensure that the student has not been suspended/expelled from the sending school, and that residency forms are correct.

ATTENDANCE RECORD

At the end of the school year, record the pupil's grade level, days present, days absent and primary cause of absences.

SCHOOL PROGRESS

1. Record the year, the grades and the subjects in which the child receives a mark.
2. In grade K, use a system of letter marks. In grades 1 through 12, use both letter and number marks.
3. Write the word "Yes" or "No" on the line to indicate "Promoted." At the secondary level promotion depends on completion of the required number of units earned and the English course completed.
4. The last name of the teacher should be placed on the line to indicate the teacher of that particular grade and the name of the school entered on the line to indicate the school, when appropriate for grade/school level.
5. The name of the school will be the school in attendance at the end of the school session.

CUMULATIVE RECORDS

Cumulative records are not to be taken home or left in classrooms overnight. Cumulative records will be stored in the designated area. All cumulative record usage is to be recorded and maintained in each child's cumulative folder.

PARENTAL ACCESS

Parents have the right to view their child's record with the permission of the school counselor.

PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL RECRUITMENT

To be considered for employment, persons seeking professional staff positions in the South Panola School District either through initial employment or promotion shall be required to have filed in the superintendent's office a current application for the desired position.

All applicants for professional staff positions in the South Panola School District must hold or be able to obtain a valid Mississippi Teaching Certificate with the appropriate endorsements.

Incomplete applications for employment may not be considered. The South Panola School district offers educational and employment opportunities to all persons without discrimination and without regard to sex, race, religion, color, national origin, or handicap.

TRANSFERS

1. The superintendent has the authority to change the grade or school assignment of all teachers and other employees. All such changes are subject to the approval of the school board.
2. Teachers who desire a transfer from their present teaching assignment must make such requests in writing to the principal and superintendent prior to April 1 for the following school year. Such transfers must be approved by the principals involved, superintendent and board.
3. Transfers will be considered on their own merits.

MEETINGS AND NOTIFICATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS – CERTIFIED/LICENSED EMPLOYEES

Meetings of all professional organizations, or programs sponsored by the organizations, such as surveys, insurance presentations, recruitment of members, etc., shall be conducted at a time other than the normal working day of staff members. The meetings or surveys may be held on school premises, but only after prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools. Announcements or other information regarding professional organizations may be made at general faculty meetings or sent through the inter-school mail only with prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools. GBS/MGA

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

The South Panola School District will not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its program and activities to the extent provided by law.

Questions concerning Section 504 may be directed to the Section 504/Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator as follows:

Mrs. Melinda Price
209 Boothe Street, Batesville, Mississippi 38606
(662) 563-9361

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Violations of the Sexual Harassment Policy (GBR) by administrators, teachers, staff and students will be regarded as a violation of a person's civil rights. Violators are subject to disciplinary action. Reprisals against a complainant may also constitute unlawful behavior.

Pursuant to Title IX requirements, all South Panola School District employees are obligated to report any notice or allegations of sexual misconduct & harassment to the Title IX Coordinator. Please refer to South Panola School District Policy Sections GBR, GBR-P, JB and JB-P for any District sexual harassment grievance processes and procedures. Inquiries concerning the South Panola School District Sexual Harassment Policy should be directed to the office of the superintendent.

TITLE IX

The South Panola School District is in compliance with the requirements of Title IX of Educational Amendments of 1972, which prohibits sex discrimination in federally assisted education programs. Title IX states: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program of activity receiving federal financial assistance." The South Panola School District shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, disability, religion, national origin, or military status with regard to any policy, procedure, program operation, or employment. The South Panola School District is required by Title IX and its regulations not to discriminate in such a manner. Questions or complaints concerning Title IX may be directed to **Dr. Jamone Edwards, 209 Boothe Street, Batesville, MS 38606; (662) 563-9361; jedwards1@spanola.net.**

ADA/504 Coordinator: Mrs. Melinda Price

South Panola School District
209 Boothe Street
Batesville, MS 38606
662-563-9361

Section: G Personnel

Policy Code: GAE Staff Complaints and Grievance

STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES LICENSED STAFF

The purpose of this grievance procedure is to secure at the first possible administrative level an equitable solution to any grievance.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions shall apply in this grievance procedure:

1. A “grievance” is a complaint by an individual based upon an alleged violation of his or her rights under state or federal law or board policy.
2. A “grievant” is a person or persons making the complaint.
3. The term “days” shall mean working school days and shall exclude weekends, holidays and vacation days.

PROCEDURE FOR PROCESSING GRIEVANCES

Grievances shall be processed in accordance with the following procedure:

Level One

1. All grievances, as defined above, must be presented orally to the principal or immediate supervisor of the grievant within ten (10) days of the act or omission complained of, and the principal or immediate supervisor and grievant will attempt to resolve the matter informally.
2. If the grievant is not satisfied with the action taken or the explanation given by his/her principal or immediate supervisor, the grievant shall, within ten (10) days after meeting with his/her principal or immediate supervisor, file a written statement with his/her principal or immediate supervisor setting forth in detail how the grievant claims to have been discriminated against. This written statement shall contain, in addition to the above, the time, place, and nature of the alleged act or omission and the state or federal law or board policy violated. The statement must be signed by the grievant.
3. In the event the grievant does not submit to his/her principal or immediate supervisor a written statement as required, his/her failure to do so shall be deemed as an acceptance of the informal decision rendered by his/her principal or immediate supervisor.
4. After receipt of the written statement setting forth how the grievant was allegedly discriminated against, the principal or immediate supervisor shall hold a hearing and render a decision in writing to the grievant within ten (10) days.

5. The written decision of the principal or immediate supervisor shall be deemed to be accepted by the grievant unless the grievant notifies the superintendent in writing within ten (10) days of the date of the written decision of the grievant's intention to appeal the written decision of the principal or immediate supervisor.

Level Two

1. Upon receipt by the superintendent of the written notice that the grievant intends to appeal the decision of his/her principal or immediate supervisor, the superintendent shall notify the grievant in writing within ten (10) days and shall advise the grievant of the date, time, and place upon which the matter will be considered by the superintendent. The superintendent shall schedule a hearing on the matter no later than thirty (30) days from the date of receipt of the grievant's written notice of intention to appeal the written decision of his/her principal or immediate supervisor.
2. The written statement submitted by the grievant to his/her principal or immediate supervisor in Level One shall form the basis of the grievance before the superintendent. The grievant shall submit to the superintendent in writing any and all additional information on his/her behalf which he/she desires not later than ten (10) days prior to the date upon which the matter is scheduled for hearing by the superintendent.
3. In the event the grievant does not personally attend the hearing scheduled by the superintendent, his/her failure to attend shall be deemed as an acceptance of the written decision rendered by his/her principal or immediate supervisor at LEVEL ONE.
4. The superintendent shall render a written decision to the grievant within ten (10) days of the date upon which the matter was heard.

Level Three

1. If the grievance is not resolved to the satisfaction of the grievant at LEVEL TWO, or if the superintendent does not render a decision within ten (10) days, the grievant may file the grievance with the secretary of the School Board.
2. If the grievance is not filed with the secretary of the School Board within ten (10) days of the hearing at LEVEL TWO, the grievance shall be considered resolved.
3. Within ten (10) days after receipt of the grievance, the Board secretary, in concert with the Board chairman and superintendent, shall schedule a hearing before the School Board on the grievance.
4. The board shall render its decision within fifteen (15) days of the hearing.

CAFETERIA

1. It shall be the responsibility of the principal to arrange the schedule so the children will at all times enter the cafeteria, eat their lunch, and return to their classrooms in an unhurried and relaxed manner. In the lower grades, teachers will come down the serving lines with their class at serving time to keep the serving line moving on schedule and supervise the behavior of their children.

2. Bulletins issued each day should be given to the manager so the manager may know the activities for the day, especially if it affects the number to be served in the lunchroom. Information regarding large groups leaving campus who ordinarily eat will be given to the manager two weeks in advance for the purpose of ordering food. Exact numbers should be given the day before to the manager.
3. The Director of Food Services must be notified at least 3 weeks in advance of any change in menu, such as special dinners.
4. No one except employees shall be admitted to the kitchen during preparation and serving hours except repairmen, deliverymen, or persons in possession of a current health card.
5. Daily prepayments will be allowed from students and adults.
6. No charges will be allowed for adult meals, unless a charge form has been signed.
7. No charging will be allowed by students.
8. Free meals will be served to all students enrolled in South Panola School District.
9. Any meal charges incurred before approval of a meal application is the responsibility of the parent/guardian of the student.
10. The parent(s)/guardian(s) is responsible for maintaining adequate funds in the student(s') food service meal account, including using online account services.
11. Money not utilized each week will be credited to the student's account for the next week. Cash refunds will be made only when a student withdraws from school. Refunds shall be processed by the district office.
12. Adults may purchase individually priced items.
13. Adult meals must be priced to cover the total costs of the meal.
14. Offer vs. Serve will be implemented for breakfast and for lunch at South Panola High, Batesville Junior High, Pope, Batesville Intermediate, and Batesville Middle.
15. COMPETITIVE FOODS REGULATION:
 - a. No food items will be sold on the school campus for one hour before the start of any meal service period, during the meal and until the last meal is served.
 - b. The school food service will serve only those foods, which are components of the approved federal meal patterns being served (or milk products) and such additional foods as necessary to meet the caloric requirements of the age group being served.
 - c. With the exception of milk products and water, a student may purchase individual components of the meal only after the purchase of a reimbursable meal.
 - d. Students who bring lunch from home may purchase milk products or water.

Meal Prices for 2026-2027 School Year

Students

- Lunch and Breakfast for students is free (Extra Milk \$0.50)

Adults

- Individually priced items; Full Meal Lunch \$5.25, Breakfast \$3.25

FINANCE

ACCOUNTING PROCEDURES

1. Teachers will be called upon to collect funds from students from time to time. The collections will include lunch money, workbook fees, school insurance, school photograph payments, etc. With the exception of lunch money, all monies collected by the teacher shall be recorded on the accounting sheet issued to each teacher. Diligent care must be taken in the handling of these funds. The accounting sheet should show how much money each teacher should collect and has actually collected. The teacher should sign this sheet. These accounts can then be compared to amounts turned in to the office. A record of amounts turned in for each teacher will be kept in the office. Before leaving the school each day, money collected is to be turned in to the secretary or bookkeeper, who will write the teacher a receipt. **All fees collected must be deposited in the Activity/Club Fund of each school.**
2. The principal is responsible for all funds collected and disbursed in the school with the exception of lunch money. For this reason, **no collection of funds or purchases of any kind may be made without the prior knowledge and written approval of the principal.** District purchasing process must be followed.
3. **NO FUNDRAISING/REQUEST FOR DONATIONS WITHOUT SCHOOL BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT APPROVAL. PROPER PURCHASING PROCEDURES AND RECEIPTING OF FUNDRAISER FUNDS MUST BE FOLLOWED.**
4. **NO PURCHASES ARE TO BE MADE WITHOUT THE PROPER FILING OF PURCHASE REQUISITION PAPERWORK AND OBTAINING A PURCHASE ORDER NUMBER.**

ADDRESS/TELEPHONE

Provide the school office your current address, telephone number and the name and telephone number of the person you want notified in an emergency. Should any of this information change, report the change to the office within three (3) working days.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

In determining a teacher's year of teaching experience, the state board of education, under the authority granted in Section 37-19-1 adopts and sets the following policy: The number days shall not exceed forty-five (45) consecutive school days during which a teacher may not be under contract of employment during any school year and earn a year of teaching experience still be considered to have been in full-time employment.

PAYROLL

All personnel shall be paid on the last district working day of the month by direct deposit. When such a day falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or school calendar holiday, checks shall be issued on the preceding school day.

All payroll documents must be submitted to the South Panola District Payroll Office prior to the issuance of the first pay warrant.

Payroll documents may be obtained from the District Payroll Office.

INSURANCE

Health Insurance Eligibility and Enrollment

An employee is required to complete an Application for Coverage form to apply for or waive coverage within the first 31 days of employment. If an employee does not enroll or waive coverage within 31 days of employment, application for coverage may be made only during Open Enrollment or a Special Enrollment period. Open enrollment occurs each October and an employee may choose to elect coverage for self, spouse/or any eligible dependents. The coverage elected during open enrollment takes effect January 1 of the following calendar year. Special enrollment occurs when there is a loss of coverage under another plan or as the result of gaining a new dependent. An Application for Coverage must be submitted within 60 days of a special enrollment event. The employer pays the cost of Base Coverage for all active employees and employees who enroll in Select Coverage pays a portion of the premium plus the cost of dependent coverage through payroll deduction.

Enrolling in Life Insurance

An eligible employee must either enroll in life insurance or waive coverage when one begins covered employment by completing an Application for Coverage. If an employee enrolls in the life insurance coverage, the effective date of coverage is his/her date of employment. The employee shares with his/her employer in the cost of his/her life insurance premiums. The employee pays half of the monthly premium cost through payroll deduction and the employer pays the other half.

Supplemental Coverages

All employees are offered a selection of supplemental/private coverages, which have been approved by the district, for themselves and/or dependents through payroll deduction.

LEAVE

1. **Administrative Leave:** Administrative leave may be approved for absence due to professional services such as educational conferences, conventions, and school evaluations if the teacher attends representing the school; such absence must be approved in advance by the principal and superintendent. No deduction from salary will be made and such time will not count against accrued time.
2. **Donation of Sick/Personal Leave:** 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: (1) 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. (2) 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. (3) An employee must have exhausted all of his or her accumulated leave before he or she will be eligible to receive any leave donated by another employee. Eligibility for donated injury or illness leave shall be based upon review and approval by the donor employee’s supervisor. (4) 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. (5) 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. (6) Donated leave shall not be used in lieu of disability retirement.

3. **Family & Medical Leave:** An employee has a right under the FMLA for up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in a 12-month period for the birth of a child, or the placement of a child for adoption or foster care; or a serious health condition that makes you unable to perform the essential functions of your job; or a serious health condition affecting your spouse, a child, a parent, for which you are needed to provide care. Also, your health benefits must be maintained during any period of unpaid leave under the same conditions as if you continued to work, and you must be reinstated to the same or an equivalent job with the same pay, benefits, and terms and conditions of employment on your return from leave. If you do not return to work following FMLA leave for a reason other than: (1) the continuation, recurrence, or onset of a serious health condition which would entitle you to FMLA leave; or (2) other circumstances beyond your control, you may be required to reimburse us for our share of health insurance premiums paid on your behalf during your FMLA leave.
4. **Leave of Absence:** Leave of absence without pay may be granted for approved study, health, or service in the armed forces. No leave of absence shall exceed one (1) year and the request for such leave must be made as far in advance as possible.
5. **Personal Leave:** All instructional personnel (161 days and more – see chart on following page) receive three (3) personal days per year. Notice for absences for personal reasons must be provided to the principal three (3) days in advance except in case of emergency. Personal leave shall not be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day previous to holiday or a day after a holiday.

Personal leave shall not be approved for more than 10% of each school's faculty for one (1) day. Any employee not using their personal leave will have the option of converting any unused personal days to sick leave for the next school year and accumulate toward early retirement. Personal leave may be taken on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday if an employee of a school district has either a minimum of ten (10) years experience as an employee of that school district or a minimum of thirty (30) days of unused accumulated leave that has been earned while employed in that school district. **Personal leave will not be granted on scheduled staff development days.**

6. **Sick Leave:** Each full time employee shall be credited with a minimum sick leave allowance, with pay of up to ten (10) days (**Sick and Personal Leave – Prorated**) for absences caused by illness or physical disability of the employee during that school year. Any unused portion of the total sick leave allowance shall be carried over to the next school year and credited to such certified employee if the certified employee remains employed in the same school district. In the event any public school certified employee transfers from one (1) public school district in Mississippi to another, any unused portion of the total sick leave allowance credited to such certified employee shall be credited to such certified 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 school district shall be unlimited and any sick leave in excess of the days credited toward retirement shall be reimbursed at substitute pay rate.
7. **Sick Leave (Extended):** For the first ten (10) days of absence of the certified employee because of illness or physical disability, in any school year, in excess of the sick leave allowance credited to such employee, there may be deducted from the pay of such employee the established substitute amount of compensation paid in that local school district. Thereafter, the regular pay of such absent certified employee may be suspended and withheld in its entirety or any period of absence because of illness or physical disability during that school year. No deduction from the pay of the certified employee may be made because of illness or physical disability until after all sick leave allowance credited to such employee has been used. A supervisor with the approval of the Superintendent, may grant any non-certified employee who has used all regular sick leave, special leave with pay for reasons of illness for a total of ten (10) work days during any academic year. The employee receiving special leave with pay shall have deducted from the pay of such employee the established substitute amount of compensation. Special leave with pay shall not be granted except upon a statement of a licensed physician that the employee is unable to perform regularly assigned duties.
8. **Jury Leave:** Employees shall be released for jury duty and will be paid their regular salary. Should an employee be dismissed from jury prior to 12:00 noon on any given day, the employee will return to his/her place of employment for the remainder of the school day. Jury leave will be approved by the principal or superintendent upon presentation of the summons.

SICK AND PERSONAL LEAVE - PRORATED

Sick and Personal Leave granted to an employee who begins work with the South Panola School District after the school session opens shall be prorated based on the number of days remaining in the school year.

The following table shall be used in the allocation for granting Sick Leave to all employees:

Days Employee is to Work	Sick Days Granted
10 - 25 days	1 sick day
26 - 50 days	2 sick days
51 - 75 days	3 sick days
76 - 100 days	4 sick days
101 - 125 days	5 sick days
126 - 150 days	6 sick days
151 - 175 days	7 sick days
176 - 200 days	8 sick days
201 - 225 days	9 sick days
226 - 242 days	10 sick days

The following table shall be used in the allocation for granting Personal Leave to employees:

Days Employee is to Work	Personal Days Granted
1 - 80 days	1 day
81 - 160 days	2 days
161 - 242 days	3 days

The South Panola School District shall not grant Sick or Personal Leave to teachers who retire and continue teaching on an emergency basis due to the fact that they have already received credit toward years of service for these days with the retirement system.

ATTENDANCE LEAVE

After each month of perfect attendance, full-time employees, both licensed and non-licensed, shall accumulate one (1) day of sick leave, which is in addition to the minimum number of days advanced each year. A month is defined as the period of time, which constitutes a normal pay period as determined by the finance office. Must be at least 12 workdays in a pay period to earn perfect attendance.

To certify perfect attendance for purposes of this additional leave, at the end of each payroll time period the principal or supervisor shall submit to the Payroll Office a listing of absences or a record of time worked by any full-time employee. The Payroll Office will monitor time-off requests to track perfect attendance of full-time employees.

Only full-time employees beginning the school year can receive perfect attendance. Accumulated days earned for perfect attendance throughout the year will be added to employee leave balance at the end of the school year, unless needed for use during the school year.

Personal leave days, vacation days, school business days, administrative leave with pay due to COVID-19 days and days served as a witness or juror in a court of law under subpoena shall not count against an employee's perfect attendance when proper approval is granted and proper documentation is provided. Refer to Board Policy GBRI.

STATUTORY LIMITATIONS ON ACCUMULATION OF LEAVE

Experience/Length of Service

1 month - 3 years service
37 months - 8 years service
97 months - 15 years service
Over 15 years service

Maximum Annual Accumulation

30 days per year
31.5 days per year
33 days per year
34.5 days per year

TECHNOLOGY/SCHOOL PROPERTY

ACCEPTABLE COMPUTER USAGE

The South Panola School District School Board wishes to make available to all students and staff members access to computers, networked resources, and the Internet. The South Panola School District School Board also desires for these computers, networked resources and Internet to be used in ways appropriate for an educational institution. Refer to SPSD Policy on Acceptable Computer, Network Resources and Internet Use in Appendix B of this handbook.

FIXED ASSETS PROCEDURE

SPSD will follow all procedures set by the State of MS, Office of State Auditor with regard to tracking of fixed assets. In accordance with following:

- Any equipment item purchased over \$1,000 must have a fixed asset tag.
- Specific other items under \$1,000 will also be tagged and deemed as “highly walkable.”

For New Equipment:

1. Purchase order requests will be completely filled out and approved by the principal or program director and sent to appropriate district office personnel.
2. The building level fixed asset manager (or district fixed asset manager) will be notified of the purchase.
3. The purchaser will complete a “SPSD New Asset Inventory Form”
4. A SPSD Fixed Asset Tag will be issued by the district fixed asset manager and sent to the purchaser or building fixed asset manager for permanent placement on the equipment. A copy of the completed “New Asset Inventory Form” with the SPSD asset number will be sent to the district fixed asset manager.

To Move or Transfer Equipment:

1. For Equipment that needs to be moved, an “SPSD Asset transfer form” will be completed by the person moving the equipment.
2. This form will be given to the building fixed asset manager, who will enter it into the SPSD website.

To Dispose of Fixed Asset Equipment:

1. Equipment that needs to be disposed of must be presented to the SPSD School Board for Approval. The person requesting equipment removal will contact their building fixed asset manager and/or school principal so a request can be made to the School Board. Once the School Board approves the request, the fixed asset tag can be removed and the equipment can be properly disposed.

2. The building fixed asset manager or person requesting disposal will enter the item into the SPSD fixed asset website stating the date and reason for disposal. (If the equipment was purchased with Federal Funds, the Federal Programs director must be notified.)

To Report Lost or Stolen Fixed Asset Equipment:

Any equipment lost or stolen shall be reported to the principal who shall file a report with local law enforcement and notify the appropriate district office personnel.

To Check out Technology Fixed Asset Equipment:

The SPSD School Board has allowed certified teachers and administrative staff to check out equipment to be used for school work. The guidelines and “Equipment Checkout Agreement” will be administered by the SPSD Technology Department. This Agreement is to be kept by the school fixed asset manager and will be updated annually.

PUBLIC EQUIPMENT/PROPERTY

1. All staff members are responsible for all school property and equipment and shall use public property with care and consideration. Any maintenance problem or malfunction of equipment should be reported to the principal promptly.
2. All staff should at all times require students to exercise care in use of school property and equipment. Any damages sustained by property or equipment must be assessed and paid for. Minor occurrences must also be reported to the principal promptly.
3. A search may be conducted with any or all school property or equipment by authorized personnel or their designee. This includes lockers, desks, cabinets, etc.
4. South Panola School District property including, but not limited to hand tools, power tools, equipment, vehicles, and supplies are purchased with public funds to be used for maintenance of school district property only. No school property is to be used off the premises of the South Panola School District without permission of the superintendent. School owned vehicles and equipment are required to be operated in a safe and responsible manner.

ABESTOS INSPECTION AND LEAD PAINT INSPECTION

All school buildings of South Panola School District were re-inspected for asbestos during the 2021-2022 school year. Buildings have also been evaluated for lead paint according to federal regulations. Management plans were updated and will be updated from time to time as the need arises.

A copy of the inspection results is contained in a Management Plan document on file in the principal’s office in each school and in the school district superintendent’s office located at 209 Boothe Street. Any interested party should feel free to go by any of these locations to read the reports.

2026

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

AUGUST						
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30	31					

SEPTEMBER						
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OCTOBER						
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NOVEMBER						
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29	30					

DECEMBER						
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27	28	29	30	31		

2027

JANUARY						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

FEBRUARY						
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28						

MARCH						
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28	29	30	31			

APRIL						
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MAY						
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

APPENDIX A: SOUTH PANOLA SCHOOL CALENDAR

July 27: Staff Development *(no students)*

July 28: Staff Development *(no students)*

July 29: Staff Development *(no students)*

July 30: First Day for Students

September 7: Labor Day *(school closed)*

October 5-9: Fall Break *(school closed)*

October 12: Professional Development - Data day *(no students)*

October 13: School Resumes for Students

November 23-27: Thanksgiving *(school closed)*

November 30: School Resumes for Students

December 18: Students Last Day of School

December 21-January 3: Christmas Break *(school closed)*

January 4: Professional Development - Data day *(no students)*

January 5: School Resumes for Students

January 18: Martin Luther King Jr. Day *(school closed)*

February 15: President's Day *(school closed)*

March 22-26: Spring Break *(school closed)*

March 29: Professional Development - Data day *(no students)*

March 30: School Resumes for Students

May 20: Students Last Day of School

May 21: Teacher Work Day *(no students)*

May 22: Graduation

CALENDAR KEY

 Professional Development Day *(Teacher attendance, no students)*

 Students in School

 Schools Closed

 Students Last Day of School

 Graduation

2026-2027 SPSPD PAYROLL PERIOD

Beginning Date	Ending Date	# of Days: 187 Days	# of Days: 202 Days	# of Days: 242 Days	Pay Date
7/1/2026	7/11/2026	0	0	22*	7/31/2026
7/12/2026	8/8/2026	10**	20	20	8/31/2026
8/9/2026	9/5/2026	20**	20	20	9/30/2026
9/6/2026	10/3/2026	19	19	20	10/30/2026
10/4/2026	10/31/2026	15	15	20	11/30/2026
11/1/2026	11/28/2026	15	15	19	12/18/2026
11/29/2026	1/9/2027	20	20	20	1/29/2027
1/10/2027	2/6/2027	19	19	20	2/26/2027
2/7/2027	3/6/2027	19	19	20	3/31/2027
3/7/2027	4/10/2027	20	20	20	4/30/2027
4/11/2027	5/8/2027	20	20	20	5/28/2027
5/9/2027	6/5/2027	10	15	20	6/30/2027
6/6/2027	6/30/2027	0	0	18	7/31/2027

* Includes 17 days from June 2026

Subject to change based on school calendar

** Review hours in next pay period to verify salary earned in this pay period

202 Day employees begin Monday, July 13, 2026 and last day Friday, May 28, 2027

ACCEPTABLE COMPUTER, NETWORK RESOURCES AND INTERNET USE

Policy Revised May 2026

The South Panola School District School Board wishes to make available to all students and staff access to computers, computer networked resources, and Internet Resources. The SPSD Board also desires these computers, networked resources and the Internet be used in ways appropriate for an educational institution. The intent is to make Computers, Network resources and the Internet available to improve the educational process, enhance student achievement and enhance productivity and related responsibilities and tasks where applicable.

Access to the district's computers and network resources entails responsibility. Access is a privilege, not a right. All users are to be held responsible for appropriate behavior while using school computers, network resources and the Internet just as they are during any other school activity. General rules for behavior and communications apply.

Students, parents, staff and other network users should be aware that objectionable information may be found on the Internet. Be warned that some material accessible via the Internet may contain items that are illegal, defamatory, objectionable, inaccurate, and / or potentially offensive. While SPSD will make reasonable attempts to filter objectionable material, the district will not be held responsible for inappropriate material.

Parents and guardians of students should impress upon their children the need for the appropriate use of media and information sources available via the Internet. Be advised, that some courses require Internet access and students must adhere to this policy. Failure to agree and comply with this policy may require the loss of network privileges, the removal of a student from the course, and / or other disciplinary and legal action.

OWNERSHIP AND PRIVACY ISSUES FOR COMPUTERS AND NETWORK RESOURCES

South Panola School District affirms ownership of computers and network resources that have been purchased with District funding sources. Network supervision and maintenance may require review and inspection of computers, hard drives, cache engines, routers and other electronic devices. The District reserves the right to record and monitor computer usage, access and review stored files, access and review email, messages, links on Computers and Network Devices within the School District. Courts have ruled that computers, computer hard drives, computer files, email records and other electronic information devices may be subpoenaed, and that appropriate administrators may examine electronic information in order to ascertain compliance with network guidelines for acceptable use.

STATEMENTS AND DISCLAIMERS

South Panola School District will adhere to the Child Internet Protection Act Legislation, and other state and federal laws with reference to school network resources where applicable.

South Panola Schools may post pictures and names of staff and students on the school's website that are viewable on the World Wide Web. Exclusions to this policy must be written to the School Principal requesting that no photos be published for a particular individual. These efforts are being made to give positive exposure to all individuals and related school activities.

This Acceptable use policy will be posted in student handbooks, staff handbooks and on the South Panola Web Site. Signatures of the student handbook which encompasses this policy are to be kept on file in the principal's area.

The School District makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The school system will not be responsible for any damages suffered by any user. Use of any information via the Internet is at the risk of the user.

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR USING COMPUTERS, NETWORK RESOURCES AND THE INTERNET

Individuals will be held responsible for their behavior and communication while accessing network resources and the Internet. Students, staff and other computer network users are responsible for appropriate behavior on computer networks just as they are in a classroom or a school hallway. Some common issues are discussed below:

June 2012: The South Panola School Board approved a District Internet Safety Policy in addition to this Acceptable Computer, Network Resources and Internet Use Policy to strengthen its stand on Internet Usage. This Internet Safety Policy can be found in the School Board Minutes and is linked from the South Panola School District Home Page.

Don't use school network resources for illegal purpose. Don't pirate software or violate copyright laws. All software installed on district computers must be licensed. Other than district or state provided software, any additional software to be installed must have prior approval of the principal, technology director, or superintendent.

Don't search for, access, display or transmit offensive messages or objectionable materials or inappropriate non educational web site. Don't access or transmit any material that promotes violence or the destruction of property. Don't share passwords or access another user's account. Don't change files, desktop settings, screensavers, or other system/network settings that do not belong to you. Don't post chain letters or engage in "Spamming". Don't use, disclose, disseminate, or divulge personal and/or private information about yourself, minors or any others. Don't employ or perform network actions disruptive to the normal operations of school.

Technology is not to be used to play online games or access non-instructional material.

All services, including Google Meet, should be used only for intended and permissible educational purposes. Pursuant to the District's Acceptable Use Policy, usage of resources operated by the District may be monitored by the District. Students who abuse or misuse District technology resources may be subject to disciplinary action.

Violations may result in a loss of access to computers, network resources, the Internet. Violations may also include other disciplinary and / or legal action.

Observed abuse of computers, network resources and / or the Internet should be reported to the teacher, supervisor, principal, Technology Director or Superintendent.

(See next page to sign agreement)

NETWORK USER AGREEMENT

For anyone to access the district computer network she/he must agree and adhere to this acceptable use policy.

STUDENTS AND PARENTS:

By signing the student handbook; I hereby agree to comply with the South Panola School District Board Policy on acceptable computer, network resources and Internet usage. I understand that my child will be subject to disciplinary action for violations of the Acceptable Use Policy. Violations may result in a loss of access to computers, network resources, and the Internet. Violations may also include other disciplinary and / or legal action.

STAFF:

By accepting employment with South Panola Schools: I hereby agree to comply with the South Panola School District Board Policy on acceptable computer, network resources and Internet usage. Violations may result in a loss of access to computers, network resources, and the Internet. Violations may also include other disciplinary and / or legal action. Therefore: If you do not agree with this policy and choose not to access South Panola School District computers, networked information resources and the Internet, please notify the school Principal, Technology Director or Superintendent in writing.

GUESTS:

Guests or any others are required to sign below before using South Panola Network Resources.

Name & Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Name & Signature (if needed)

Date

For additional information and complete review of the Technology/Network policies and procedures, please visit www.spsd.k12.ms.us/page/spsd-computer-usage-policy.