



**Employee Handbook
2020-2021**

**EDUCATE  MOTIVATE
GRADUATE**

August 2020

Dear Covington County School District Employee:

As an employee in the Covington County School District, you are among the best educators and support staff in the state dedicated to providing opportunities for academic excellence for students. This monumental task is accomplished only through the combined efforts of all staff members. Each position in our district plays a critical role in the academic success of our students and professional accomplishments of all employees. Covington County schools have established a rich tradition of excellence by its employees taking pride in a job well done. In the year 2020 we have all faced something for the first time - a Pandemic. Thank you in advance for things that you will take on this year on behalf of your students and colleagues. Your willingness to go above and beyond will not go unnoticed. As Steven Green said, "May all who come behind us find us faithful."

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a "quick reference" to the policies pertaining to the daily operations of the Covington County School District. This handbook contains information that will assist you in performing your job and informs you of district expectations. For additional information and a complete listing of the federal and state statutes and guidelines referred to in this handbook, consult the Covington County School District Board Policy Manual located online at www.covingtoncountyschools.org. Under Forms/Links choose Board Policy. Thank you for your commitment to the Covington County School District.

Babette Duty
Superintendent of Education

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NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Covington County School District complies with all federal and state laws and regulations and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin or ancestry, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, marriage or veteran status or disability, in employment or in the delivery of educational services. This applies to all educational programs and extracurricular activities. Inquiries associated with Title VI, Title IX, and/or accommodations for disabled employees, the public and accessibility of facilities and programs should be directed to Melissa Rogers, Title-I Director at 601-765-8247. Inquiries regarding the application of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (concerning students with disabilities who are not eligible for Special Education) / (Americans with Disability Act should be directed to Mrs. Rachel Rogers, Assistant Superintendent, at 601-765-2104. These individuals may be contacted at the district main office located at 1211 South Dogwood Avenue. The mailing address is P.O. Box 1269, Collins, MS 39428.

DISTRICT INFORMATION

Covington County School District
P.O. Box 1269
Collins, MS 39428
Telephone: 601-765-8247
Fax: 601-765-4101
www.covingtoncountyschools.org

District Mission Statement

To effectively educate all students by providing high quality instruction in a safe, orderly, and caring environment.

Covington County School District Board Members

Mr. Lynn Smith, President
Mr. Sammy Herrin, Vice President
Mrs. Renee Shoemaker, Secretary
Mr. Larry Waters
Mr. Charles Fairley, Interim
Mr. Tommy B. Rogers, Board Attorney

Central Office Administrative Staff

Mrs. Babette Duty – Superintendent
Mrs. Susan Deen – Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum Accreditation
Mrs. Rachel Rogers – Assistant Superintendent, Special Programs
Mrs. Melissa Rogers – Federal Programs Director
Mrs. Rita Clark – Business Manager
Mrs. Gwen Hitt – Communications Director
Mrs. Audra McDonald – Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, SAMS
Mrs. Jearleain Magee – Federal Programs Secretary
Mrs. Pattye Graham – Food Service Coordinator
Mrs. Jungeline Williams-Coney – 16th Section Coordinator/Purchasing Coordinator
Mrs. Tessa Roberts – Payroll Manager/Insurance Specialist
Mrs. Kelly Craft – Accounts Payable
Mrs. Shelia Ranking – Human Resources
Mrs. Tabitha Graves – Receptionist, Transportation Secretary
Mr. Paul Magee – School Resource Officer
Mr. Will Beasley – Technology Coordinator
Mr. Howard Flowers – Transportation Coordinator
Mrs. Donna Craft - Special Programs Case Manager, District Test Coordinator
Mr. Desmond Griffith, Behavior Specialist SPED
Mrs. Patricia Runnels, Behavior Specialist Regular Ed, Psychometrist
Mrs. Erika Daley, Speech Services
Mrs. Danvis Morgan, MSIS Coordinator

COVINGTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

P. O. Box 1269

1211 South Dogwood Ave.

Phone 601-765-8247 Fax 601-765-9402 or 601-765-9468

Collins Elementary

P O Box 160
401 Dogwood St.
Collins, MS 39428
601-765-4383 Fax 601-765-2189

Hopewell Elementary

824 Hopewell Road
Collins, MS 39428
601-765-8568 Fax
601-765-3398

Carver Middle

P O Box 757
104 Carver Drive
Collins, MS 39428
601-765-4908- Fax 601-765-4451

Seminary Elementary

P O Box 34
200 Main Street
Seminary, MS 39479
601-722-3355 Fax 601-722-0230

Collins High

P O Box 1479
1208 South Dogwood Ave
Collins, MS 39428
601-765-3203 Fax 601-765-4116

Seminary Middle

P O Box 34
200 Main Street
Seminary, MS 39479
601-722-4510 Fax 601-722-0232

Mt. Olive Elementary

P O Box 309
301 South 4th Street
Mt. Olive, MS 39119
601-797-3159 Fax 601-797-9482

Seminary High

P O Box 34
200 Main Street
Seminary, MS 39479
601-722-3220 Fax 601-722-0239

Mt. Olive High

P O Box 309
301 South 4th Street
Mt. Olive, MS 39119
601-797-3939 Fax 601-797-9496

Covington County Vo-Tech

P O Box 1268
1200 South Dogwood Ave.
Collins, MS 39428
601-765-8253 Fax 601-765-9120

Covington County Education Center

P O Box 1269
1140 Elm Street
Collins, MS 39428
601-765-8247 Fax 601-765-8073

**Covington County
Attendance Officer**

P.O. Box 757
104 Carver Drive
Collins, MS 39428
601-765-4841 Fax 601-765-8073

Department Contact Persons

Employees are requested to work with their principals in using the following district-level services and resources. For questions about individual schools, call the building principal. For additional assistance, phone Covington County Central Office 601-765-8247.

Accounts Payable.....	601-765-8247, Kelly Craft
Activity Funds.....	Building Principal
Athletics.....	School Athletic Director
Communications.....	601-765-8247, Gwen Hitt
Curriculum.....	601-765-8247, Susan Deen
Discipline.....	Building Principal
Evaluation.....	Building Principal
Field Trips.....	Building Principal
Fixed Assets.....	601-765-8247
Food Services.....	601-765-8247, Pattye Graham
Gifted Education.....	601-765-8247, Melissa Rogers
Insurance.....	601-765-8247, Tessa Roberts
Leave/Absences.....	601-765-8247, Sheila Rankin
Maintenance.....	601-765-8247, Johnny McDonald
National Board Certification.....	601-765-8247, Rita Clark
Payroll.....	601-765-8247, Tessa Roberts
Professional Development.....	601-765-8247 Building Principal
Purchasing.....	601-765-8247, Jungeline Williams-Coney
Employment Applications.....	601-765-8247, Sheila Rankin
Retirement	601-765-8247, Tessa Roberts
Section 504.....	601-765-8247, Rachel Rogers
Special Education.....	601-765-8247, Rachel Rogers
Student Teachers.....	601-765-8247, Susan Deen
Substitute Teachers	601-765-8247, Sheila Rankin
Teacher Certification.....	601-765-8247, Susan Deen
Technology.....	601-765-8247, Will Beasley
Textbooks.....	601-765-8247, Susan Deen
Title Programs.....	601-765-8247, Melissa Rogers
Testing.....	601-765-8247, Donna Craft
Transportation.....	601-765-8227, Howard Flowers
Workers' Compensation.....	601-765-8247, Sheila Rankin

District 2020-2021 Calendar

I. Teacher Planning Meetings (beginning of school year)

Orientation for new teachers..... TBD
 First Day for Teachers/StaffAugust 20, 2020
 Professional Development / Work Days.....August 20-28, 2020

II. First Day for All Students.....September 8, 2020 Rolling Start (1st, 2nd, 5th, 6th, 9th, 10th grades)... August 31, 2020 & September 2, 2020 (3rd, 4th, 7th, 8th, 11th, 12th grades).September 1, 2020 & September 4, 2020 (Kindergarten).....September 5, 2020

III. School Months as Reported to Mississippi Student Information System

Month	Begins	Ends	Number of Days
Month One	August 31, 2020	September 30, 2020	22
Month Two	October 1, 2020	October 31, 2020	22
Month Three	November 1, 2020	November 30, 2020	16
Month Four	December 1, 2020	December 18, 2020	14
Month Five	January 4, 2021	January 31, 2021	19
Month Six	February 1, 2021	February 26, 2021	19
Month Seven	March 1, 2020	March 31, 2020	18
Month Eight	April 1, 2021	April 30, 2021	21
Month Nine	May 3, 2021	June 11, 2021	29
TOTAL DAYS			180

IV. Professional Development and Teacher Work Day Schedule

Date	Time	Place	Participants
August 20-21, 2020	8:00 a.m.	Home School	Teachers Only
August 24-28, 2020	8:00 a.m.	Home School	Teachers and Assistants

*Contact principal for time and location details.

V. School Not In Session Schedule

Event	Day Dismissed	Day(s) Missed	Date of Return
Labor Day	September 4, 2020	September 7, 2020	September 8, 2020
Thanksgiving	November 20, 2020	November 23-27, 2020	November 30, 2020
Christmas Break	December 18, 2020 (60% day)	December 21, 2020- January 1, 2021	January 4, 2021 (Teachers, TA's, & Students)
Martin Luther King	January 15, 2021	January 18, 2021	January 19, 2021
President's Day	February 12, 2021	February 15, 2021	February 16, 2021
Spring Break	March 12, 2021	March 15-19, 2021	March 22, 2021 (Teachers, TA's, & Students)
Easter	April 1, 2021	April 2, 2021	April 6, 2021 (Teachers, TA's, & Students)
Memorial Day	May 28, 2021	May 31, 2021	June 1, 2021

VI. Six-Week Periods – Elementary/Secondary Pupils

Period	Begins	Progress Reports	Ends	Report Cards
Term 1	August 31, 2020	September 24, 2020	October 9, 2020	October 15, 2020
Term 2	October 12, 2020	November 5, 2020	November 20, 2020	December 3, 2020
Term 3	November 30, 2020	January 7, 2021	January 29, 2021	February 4, 2021
Term 4	February 1, 2021	February 25, 2021	March 12, 2021	March 25, 2021
Term 5	March 22, 2021	April 15, 2021	May 7, 2021	May 13, 2021
Term 6	May 10, 2021	May 27, 2021	June 11, 2021	June 17, 2021

December 18, 2020 and June 11, 2021 will be 60% days (students only).

Last Day for Students: Friday, June 11, 2021 Total Student Days: 180
 Last Day for Teachers: Friday, June 11, 2021 Total Teacher Days: 187
 Graduations: Collins High - TBD
 Seminary High – TBD
 Mt. Olive High – TBD

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

The Covington County School District, in an effort to attract and retain the highest quality personnel to serve the children of Covington County, offers a wide range of benefits to eligible personnel. Programs such as social security, workers' compensation, state retirement, and unemployment insurance cover all eligible employees in the manner prescribed by law. Benefits eligibility is dependent upon employee classification and other factors. Details of many of the programs can be found within this handbook.

The following benefit programs are available to eligible employees:

- Cafeteria Plan
- Public Employment Retirement System
- Direct Deposit
- Holidays
- Insurance
- Medical Leave
- Personal Leave
- Sick Leave Benefits
- Vacation Leave (12 month employees)

Some benefit programs require contributions from employees, but others are fully paid by the district. The benefit package for full-time employees represents an additional cost to the Covington County School District.

BENEFITS CONTINUATION (COBRA)

The Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) gives employees and their qualified beneficiaries the opportunity to continue insurance coverage under the Covington County School District's health plan when a "qualifying condition" would normally result in the loss of eligibility. Such conditions include resignation, termination of employment, a reduction in the employee's hours, a leave of absence, an employee's divorce or legal separation, a dependent child no longer meeting eligibility requirements, or death of an employee.

Under COBRA the employee or beneficiary pays the full cost of coverage.

CAFETERIA PLAN

Covington County School District participates in the Section 125 Flexible Benefit Plan. Many insurance premiums paid through payroll deduction are exempt from social security, federal, and state income taxes.

DIRECT DEPOSIT AND SALARY

Covington County School District certified & classified employees must access their check stubs via Active Resources. Printed checks stubs will no longer be available for distribution beginning August 2020. In the event a printed check stub is requested, allow 3-5 days for receipt. This does not apply to Custodians or Substitute Teachers. State law mandates the direct deposit of monthly payroll checks. See *MS State Code 37-151-103*.

PAY DATES FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2021

July 30, 2020	
July 31, 2020	January 29, 2021
August 31, 2020	February 26, 2021
September 30, 2020	March 31, 2021
October 30, 2020	April 30, 2021
November 31, 2020	May 28, 2021
December 18, 2020	June 30, 2021

HOLIDAYS

The Covington County School District will observe the holidays listed below.

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Break
- Christmas Break
- Dr. Martin Luther King Day
- President's Day
- Spring Break
- Easter Break
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day

INSURANCE

The Covington County School District participates in the state health insurance plan for school employees. Health insurance is provided for all full-time employees and bus drivers of the district. A full-time employee is defined as one who works 20 hours per week or more.

Eligible employees may participate in other insurance plans subject to all terms and agreement between the Covington County School District and the insurance carriers. Information on all available insurance types and plans may be obtained from the Insurance Specialist at the District Administrative Office. Additional insurance will be deducted from the employee's salary.

All employees are eligible to participate in voluntary deduction of tax shelter annuity.

For easy access to insurance information, go to <http://knowyourbenefits.dfa.ms.gov/>

LEAVE

Approved School Business Leave

All leave must be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor. Leave for approved school business is at the discretion of an administrator. Leave for approved school business is not charged against an employee's leave days. This leave is referred to as Professional School Business Leave in Active Resources.

Donating Leave

An employee may donate a portion of his/her earned personal or sick leave to another employee. The employee receiving the leave must be suffering from a catastrophic injury or illness or have an immediate family member requiring care by the employee receiving leave. Reference may be found in the Covington County *School District Board Policies* – Policy GBRI.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Employees who have been employed with Covington County School District for at least twelve (12) months and have worked 1250 hours in the immediate past twelve (12) months are eligible for up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave for the following:

1. The birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care.
2. The care of the employee's spouse, parent, or child with a serious health condition.
3. The employee's own serious health condition.

Employees seeking to use Family Medical Leave must provide a 30-day advance notice of the need to take leave when it is foreseeable. Planned medical treatment must be scheduled so that it will not unduly disrupt the employer's operation. Reference may be found in the Covington County *School District Board Policies* – Policy GBRIA.

Jury Duty

There is no deduction in pay for service as a juror except when the employee is the defendant or plaintiff. Any payment made to staff members for service as a juror may not be charged against the salary of the staff member. Leave for jury duty is not charged against any approved leave. Reference may be found in the Covington County *School District Board Policies* – Policy GBRI.

Military Leave

A military leave of absence will be granted to employees who are absent from work because of service in the United States Uniformed Services in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Advanced notice of military service is required, unless military necessity prevents such notice or is otherwise impossible or unreasonable. Employees will continue to receive full pay while on leave for training assignments (up to 15 days) and shorter absences. Longer assignments to fulfill military requirements, such as activation through a reserve unit, may be granted by prior approval from the Superintendent. This military leave can be granted up to one year without pay. Employees returning from military leave will be placed in the position they would have attained had they remained continuously employed or placed in a comparable position as required by USERRA. Reference may be found in the Covington County *School District Board Policies* – Policy GBRIID.

Personal Leave

Personal leave is limited to two earned sick leave days per contract period. Full per diem shall be deducted from the salary of each employee who is absent for personal business more than the number of accumulated days. If unused, these days will remain as accumulated sick leave days. **Such personal leave shall not may be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, or on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday, unless on such days an immediate family member is being deployed for military service [Mississippi Code § 37-7-307 (3)]. Personal Leave my be taken on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, on a day previous to a holiday or a day after a holiday if, on the applicable day, the employee has been summoned to appear for jury duty or as a witness in court. 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 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.** Reference may be found in the Covington County *School District Board Policies* – Policy GBRI.

Professional Leave

Requests for professional leave or meetings must take into consideration the good of the student and school. The number of professional leave days granted at one time will be limited and dependent upon the availability of qualified substitutes.

Absences for professional purposes must be cleared through the principal, then by written request to the Superintendent. Requests should be arranged as far in advance as possible and will generally be limited to in-state activities. Limited professional leave may be granted for officers of meetings of the professional organizations. Attendance at other professional meetings will be contingent upon such factors as numbers involved, expense to the district, and amount of time away from school. Professional leave should be granted only when it will have a positive effect upon the school system.

Bereavement Leave (Effective July 1, 2017)

Covington County School District provides time off work to employees when eligible family members pass away. The time off will be paid leave.

Employees may be granted up to three (3) consecutive days bereavement leave for an immediate family member.

The bereavement leave policy defines "current immediate family" as:

The employee's family whose title contains any of the following:

Husband, Wife, Mother, Stepmother, Father, Stepfather, Son, Stepson, Daughter, Stepdaughter, Brother, Stepbrother, Sister, Stepsister, Grandparents, Grandchildren

An absence of one (1) day is allowed on the account of death of the following family members: father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, daughter-in-law, or son-in-law.

No more than five (5) days in a school year will be granted for BEREAVEMENT for any employee of Covington County School District.

Documentation is required

RESIGNATION

Resignations must be submitted in writing to the principal or supervisor and forwarded to the Superintendent. Licensed personnel who have signed a contract for the coming school year may not have their resignations accepted unless a satisfactory replacement can be secured.

Resignations or applications for release from the contract will be received at the discretion of the Superintendent and only if properly executed. If employment is to be terminated during the school session, the resignation should be submitted in writing to the Superintendent and approved by the Covington County School Board. A letter of resignation must include an effective date is required to be submitted by the employee.

Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)

Paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave will be provided for specified reasons related to COVID-19. The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) requires employers to provide paid sick leave, expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. **These provisions will apply from April 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.** Entitlements in this category of FFCRA are Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA) and Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act (EFMLEA). *Reference may be found in the Covington County School District Board Policies – Section G –*

RETIREMENT

Any employee anticipating retirement during or at the end of the school fiscal year should adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Notify the principal or supervisor of intent to retire.
2. Notify Personnel/Payroll Specialist at Central Office.
3. Contact the Payroll Specialist and request a retirement package from Central Office.
4. When the package is received, call the payroll office to set up an appointment to complete retirement papers.

Upon retirement from employment, each licensed and non-licensed 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. For non-licensed 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. No payment for unused accumulated leave may be made to an employee at termination or separation from service for any purpose other than for the purpose of retirement.

According to the PERS handbook, accumulated leave days may be credited toward retirement using the following:

Total Hours*	Equivalent 8-Hour Work Days**	Applicable Service Credit Based on 8- Hour Work Days	
		BEFORE JULY 1, 2017	AFTER JULY 1, 2017
120	15	0.2500	0.2500(3months)
288	36	0.2500	0.2500(3months)
456	57	0.2500	0.2500(3months)
624	78	0.5000	0.5000(6months)
792	99	0.5000	0.5833(7months)
960	120	0.5000	0.6667(8months)
1,128	141	0.7500	0.7500(9months)
1,296	162	0.7500	0.8333(10months)
1,464	183	0.7500	0.9167(11months)
1,632	204	1.0000	1.0000(12months)
1,800	225	1.0000	1.0833(13months)
1,968	246	1.0000	1.667(14months)

NOTE: All accumulated, uncompensated unused leave certified to PERS must have been actually earned and accrued by the employee for whom the leave is certified. It is unlawful to certify leave to PERS that has been donated or transferred from another individual.

*120 hours for first month and 168 for each subsequent month; **15days for first month and 21 days for each subsequent month

SICKNESS

Accumulation

1. Certified/classified

<u>Days to Work</u>	<u>Sick Days Granted</u>	<u>Personal Days Granted</u>
230 above	10	12
205 – 229	8	2
180 – 204	7	2

2. Unused sick leave and personal days shall accumulate as sick leave days to an unlimited amount.
3. All available leave must be exhausted before leave without pay is requested or taken.
4. Any approved leave of absence shall not be considered an interruption of employment; however, an employee shall not earn sick leave days while on leave without pay.

Sickness with Pay

Sick leave days (1/4 day or more) may be used for the following:

1. Personal illness of the employee.
 - a. Illness in the immediate family to include: husband or wife, child, sister, brother, father, mother, grandparent and grandchildren, or anyone of like relationship by marriage, or persons who have stood in loco parentis.
 - b. Absence due to bodily injury.
 - c. Medical or dental appointments.
 - d. Covington County School District provides time off work to employees when eligible family members pass away. The time off will be paid leave. Employees may be granted up to three (3) consecutive days bereavement leave for an immediate family member. The bereavement leave policy defines “current immediate family” as:

The employee’s family whose title contains any of the following:

Husband, Wife, Mother, Stepmother, Father, Stepfather, Son, Stepson, Daughter, Stepdaughter, Brother, Stepbrother, Sister, Stepsister, Grandparents, Grandchildren.

- e. Any unused portion of the total sick leave allowance shall be carried over to the next school year if the employee remains employed in the school district. In the event the employee terminates employment, any unused portion of the total leave allowance credited to such employee in the computation of unused leave for retirement purposes shall fall under Section 25-11-109, Mississippi Code of 1972 which states, “...accumulation of sick leave allowed in the school district shall be unlimited.”
2. In accordance with State law, employees shall not take sick leave on the first day of the school term, the last day of the school term, the day prior to a holiday, or the day after a holiday, unless a licensed medical physician’s statement is received on the day the employee returns to work. This applies to all employees, classified and certified, for all holidays listed on page 10.

Sick Leave – 10 Day Dock

For the first ten (10) days of absence of a licensed employee because of illness or physical disability, in any school year, the excess of the sick leave allowance credited to such licensed employee, there may be deducted from the pay of such licensed employee the established substitute amount of licensed employee compensation paid in that local school district, necessitated because of the absence of the licensed employee as a result of illness or physical disability. Thereafter, the regular pay of such absent licensed employee will be suspended and withheld in its entirety for any period of absence because of illness or physical disability during that school year. **A licensed medical physician’s statement is required in order to use 10 day dock days and is due to Tessa Roberts the day the employee returns to work.**

Job-Related Injuries

Employees who sustain job-related injuries/illness shall:

1. Immediately report the injury.
2. Be eligible for school district benefits in accordance with workers' compensation paid by the district.
3. An employee shall use his/her accumulated leave when covered by workers' compensation.

Physicians Verification of Illness

A licensed medical physician's statement **may be requested at any time** by the employee's immediate supervisor. The statement should include the expected length of absence.

An employee who has not been granted a sick leave without pay for a specified period of time shall be absent only for such days as the employee's licensed medical physician certifies that the employee was unable to work.

Should an employee be absent from duty and fails to comply with regulations concerning sick leave, such employee shall be charged with unauthorized absence. However, the Board will hear evidence in cases of emergency as to the reasons for late verification of absence and may take such action as necessary.

See Covington County *School District Board Manual* Policy GBRIA – FMLA for addition guidelines and GBRI – Personal Illness.

Penalty for Giving False Information

The school board may adopt rules and regulations which will reasonably aid to implement the policy of sick and personal leave, including, but not limited to, rules and regulations having the following general effect:

1. Requiring the absent employee to furnish the certificate of a physician or dentist or other medical practitioner as to the illness of the absent employee, where the absence is for three (3) or more consecutive school days, or for two (2) consecutive school days immediately preceding or following a nonschool day;
2. Providing penalties, by way of full deduction from salary, or entry on the work record of the employee, or other appropriate penalties, for any materially false statement by the employee as to the cause of absence;
3. Forfeiture of accumulated or future sick leave, if the absence of the employee is caused by optional dental or medical treatment or surgery which could, without medical risk, have been provided, furnished or performed at a time when school was not in session;
4. Enlarging, increasing or providing greater sick or personal leave allowances than the minimum standards established by this section in the discretion of the school board of each school district. Covington County *School District Board Policies* - Policy GBRI.

Separation with Unearned Leave Time Taken

All leave for the year is posted before it is actually earned. If a classified employee is separated mid-year, any unearned leave taken will be docked from the employees final payroll check.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Suspension: All Employees

The Superintendent suspends employees under their supervision for failure to comply with Board policies and procedures or reasonable requests of the administration. The employee may have the right to a hearing as outlined in the grievance procedures.

Dismissal for Cause

State law gives the Superintendent the authority to suspend or remove a staff member. Reasons for dismissal include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Incompetence
2. Neglect of duty
3. Immoral conduct
4. Intemperance
5. Excessive absences
6. Tardiness
7. Brutal treatment of a pupil
8. Insubordination
9. Violation of Confidentiality

Before being removed or suspended, the staff member shall receive written notification of the charges. The licensed staff member may be entitled to request a public hearing within five (5) working days of the notification. The hearing must be held from five (5) to thirty (30) days from the time of the request. If the licensed employee does not request a hearing within five (5) days after being notified, the decision of the Superintendent is final.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION

The Covington County School District provides the Worker's Compensation Insurance Program at no cost to employees. This program covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment that requires medical, surgical, or hospital treatment. Subject to applicable legal requirements, Worker's Compensation Insurance provides benefits after a short waiting period or, if the employee is hospitalized, immediately.

An employee should notify his/her immediate supervisor whenever an injury is incurred whether or not medical attention is needed. A worker's compensation form should be filled out within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident. It is important to report all injuries immediately. This will enable an eligible employee to qualify for coverage as quickly as possible. The immediate supervisor will notify the Central Office, make the necessary arrangements for medical attention, and see that all claims forms are properly completed.

EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS

ABSENCES

Any employee who anticipates an absence for any reason should report that absence to his/her principal or immediate supervisor in advance or the day of the absence or will lose full payment for unreported absences except in emergency situations. In non-emergency situations when no notification is made to your supervisor, you may be subject to full loss of pay at the rate of daily rate x number of days missed if. **ALL LEAVE SHOULD BE ENTERED INTO ACTIVE RESOURCES WITHIN 24 HOURS OF ABSENCE.**

ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The district electronic information systems are provided to conduct research, access educational resources, and communicate with others. Individual users are responsible for complying with district standards and user rules.

Electronic mail and telecommunication are not to be utilized by employees to share confidential information about students or other employees, except in accordance with Mississippi Department of Education requirements and guidelines.

Students are responsible for the appropriate use of school electronic systems and should follow school and district regulations governing the systems.

Following are the Acceptable Use Regulations:

1. School district's computers and computer networks are for academic use only and computers will be turned off before leaving for the day.
2. The school district will perform periodic computer usage audits, so be prepared to be held accountable for your actions.
3. User agrees to notify a staff person immediately if you encounter material that violates the district's acceptable use policy or the school's code of conduct.
4. Users shall not access, transmit or retransmit language that may be considered offensive, defamatory, and abusive or harasses another person.
5. Users will not damage the district's computers, peripherals or network in any way.
6. Users shall not degrade the performance of the computer or network by posting or accessing non-school related items.
7. Do not use the network for illegal activities
8. User shall not install, download, upload, or post unauthorized files.
9. Do not violate copyright laws, including copying music from the Internet.
10. Do not share your password or system password with anyone.
11. Do not attempt to "hack" or "crack" the district computers or network.
12. School email accounts are provided to insure efficient communication. Any use of email on a school computer may be subject to public records review.
13. Users will not subscribe to any "List Servers" or Weather Bug without prior approval from the users immediate supervisor.
14. Do not access files, folders, or work of other students, teachers, or administrators.
15. Students and staff are not allowed to use district computers to conduct a business, shop on-line or make personal purchases from the Internet.
16. Students and staff are not allowed the use of any chat programs except Google Chat.

Refer to the complete policy: Policy IFBGA – Covington County *School District Board Policies*

ACCIDENT REPORTS

Any accident involving school personnel, students, or others on school property should be reported immediately to the principal. All accidents involving district vehicles should be reported to the proper law enforcement agency and the superintendent of schools. Any accident involving

school personnel or students participating in a school event away from Covington County School District should be reported immediately to the school supervisory representative on the trip and to the school superintendent. The form that should be used to document this accident can be found on the District website under the Information Tab then choose Business Forms, and Accident/Injury Report.

ALCOHOL AND CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES PROHIBITION

No employee of the Covington County School District, whether licensed or non-licensed, shall possess, sell, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any alcoholic beverage, or any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, or marijuana while at work on school property, in school vehicles, or at school-sponsored activities. Valid drugs prescribed to employees are exempted. Violation of the policy by an employee may result in dismissal from employment with the school district.

Transportation employees are subject to regulations by the Federal Highway Administration and the United States Department of Transportation. As such, employees who are engaged as drivers of commercial motor vehicles and who are subject to commercial driver's license requirements must participate in mandatory random drug testing procedures. Drivers are prohibited from using controlled substances and will be tested for Marijuana, Amphetamines, Opiates, Cocaine, and Phencyclidine (PCP). Drivers are prohibited from possessing alcohol while on duty and from consuming alcohol four hours prior to duty or for eight hours after involvement in an accident. Drivers may not at any time refuse to consent to this policy. Any driver in violation of this policy may be subject to termination. Refer to the Code of Federal Regulations 49, Sections 40, 382, 391, and 395 as amended in 1994; the MS Code of 1972, Section 71-7-1; and as a condition of employment in the Covington County School District, each employee shall notify his or her supervisor of his or her conviction of any criminal drug statute for a violation occurring in the workplace as defined above, no later than 5 days after such conviction. Policy GBRL in the Covington County *School District Board Policies*.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

The Covington County School District requires that all persons recommended for employment submit to a current criminal records background check and a current child abuse registry check. This check is performed for licensed and non-licensed prospective employees. Prospective employees must pay a processing fee for the checks.

It is the responsibility of the building principal to ensure that any volunteer etc. who comes into contact with students must submit to a background check at their own expense. Teachers are responsible for informing the principal of any volunteers, etc. they are using in their classrooms. It is all school employees' responsibilities to keep students safe and to report any concerns to their immediate supervisor.

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Employees of the Covington County School District are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect positively on the school district and community, thus promoting a positive environment for teaching, learning, and student well-being.

The dignity of students and of the educational environment shall be maintained at all times. Unseemly dress, conduct, or the use of abusive, foul or profane language in the presence of students is expressly prohibited and will not be tolerated. All staff members are expected to dress in a manner that is professionally appropriate for the duties to which they are assigned. Attire should be clean, tasteful, and in good repair. Staff members should regard it as their professional responsibility to dress in a manner that sets a good example for students and that conveys a positive professional image. Any type or style of clothing or manner of dress or personal presentment prohibited for students shall likewise be prohibited for employees. Policy GABA in the Covington County *School District Board Policies*.

EVALUATIONS

The Covington County School District values the potential for instructional improvement provided by a valid and reliable teacher evaluation system. The evaluation procedures outlined below provide the administrator with the opportunity to assess and evaluate the performance of the teacher on the district-adopted teacher evaluation criteria. Through the evaluation process, strengths and weaknesses will be identified and communicated to teachers. Appropriate guidance and assistance will then be provided as needed to assist in improving performance.

The Mississippi Professional Growth System will be used to document evaluations. The schedule for drop in visits and formal evaluations outlined in the Professional Growth System (PGS) process will be followed by school administrators. Teachers will be made aware of all PGS training that is available from MDE by the school principal. See building level principal for details and timelines for classroom visits. School Counselors will be evaluated using the Mississippi Counselors' Appraisal Rubric (M-CAR) and the Mississippi Student Services Appraisal Rubric (M-SSAR), Librarians will be evaluated using the Mississippi School Librarian Evaluation Appraisal Rubric. Any certified teacher may be placed on an improvement plan if evaluation reveals their performance is substandard.

GRIEVANCES AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES (Certified Staff Only)

As the primary means of solving staff complaints and grievances, the Board expects each administrator to (1) discover and practice effective means of resolving differences that may arise among employees and administrators; (2) reduce potential reasons of complaints and grievances; and (3) establish and maintain recognized channels of communication between the staff, administration, and Board.

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 of the grievant within five (5) days of the act or omission complained of, and the principal 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 principal the grievant shall, within five (5) days after meeting with his principal, file a written statement with his principal 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 principal a written statement as required, his failure to do so shall be deemed as an acceptance of the informal decision rendered by his principal.
4. Within five (5) days after receiving the grievant's signed statement the principal shall send to the superintendent a copy of the grievant's statement, along with a statement from the principal setting forth his response to the grievant and/or his decisions, as is applicable. At the same time, the principal shall also provide a copy of his written statement to the grievant.

Level Two

1. Upon receipt by the superintendent of the written notice that the grievant intends to appeal the decision of his principal, the superintendent shall notify the grievant in writing within five (5) 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 ten (10) days from the date of receipt of the grievant's written notice of intention to appeal the written decision of his principal.

2. The written statement submitted by the grievant to his principal in Level One shall form the basis of the grievance before the superintendent. The grievant shall submit in writing any and all additional information on his behalf which he desires to the superintendent not later than five (5) 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 failure to attend shall be deemed as an acceptance of the written decision rendered by his principal at LEVEL ONE.

4. The superintendent shall render a written decision to the grievant within five (5) 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 five (5) 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 five (5) days of the hearing at LEVEL TWO, the grievance shall be considered resolved.

3. Within five (5) 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 seven (7) days of the hearing. Policy GAE-P of the Covington County *School District Board Policies*.

HARASSMENT

It is the policy of the Covington County School District to maintain learning and working environments free from any form of sexual or racial harassment, defined as "a knowing and/or willful course of conduct directed at a specific person which seriously alarms, annoys, harasses, or threatens the person, and which serves no legitimate purpose. The course of conduct must be such as would cause a reasonable person to suffer substantial emotional distress, and must actually cause substantial emotional distress to the person." [Code 97-3-107 (4)]

The school district will act to investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written, of harassment, threats, violence, or assault, and to discipline or take appropriate action against any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel who is found to have violated this policy. For more information and reporting procedures, refer to MS Code 97-3-107 Protecting Students from Harassment and Hate Crime, US Dept. of Ed., 1999 **Policy GAEA**

NEWS MEDIA / INTERVIEW REQUESTS

The Superintendent is responsible for providing accurate and timely information to all educational staff, students, and citizens of the community regarding the efforts by the district to provide each student with the best possible education and preparation. The Superintendent must approve all information and interview requests prior to publishing or airing. The Superintendent or designee is the sole spokesperson for the district.

Parents in the district must sign a release to give or deny permission for their child(ren) to participate in any public relations activities or school related websites.

Educators should report noteworthy activities within classrooms and schools to schoolnews@covingtoncountyschools.org to be placed on a rotating basis in The News Commercial as part of a partnership with The News Commercial. All additional articles will be published at a cost to the person presenting the article for publication. Any events, activities, and stories from each school can be placed on the District Facebook page by following the procedure designed by each building level principal.

OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

The school board considers a professional assignment in the school district a full time job. Employees shall not engage at any time in any outside employment that would interfere with their effectiveness in performing regularly assigned duties; or would compromise or embarrass the school system; or would in any way conflict with assigned duties. Employees shall not be employed or involved in any private or otherwise public business during hours necessary to fulfill their contractual responsibilities. **Policy GBRG**

PARKING / PERSONAL PROPERTY

The district is not responsible for damage or theft to cars or other personal property. Employees are asked to park their automobiles in designated areas. If a fender bender occurs, notify the administrator of the building immediately. He/she will contact the School Resource Officer.

PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENT

The superintendent of schools has the power and authority to make assignments to the various schools in the district of all non-instructional, non-licensed employees, and all licensed employees. This includes the authority to make reassignment of such employees as deemed appropriate provided that the employee is properly licensed in the position to which he or she is moved. All reassignments are subject to review by the school board.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY OF STAFF MEMBERS

The Board recognizes and encourages the right of its employees, as citizens, to engage in activities, which exemplify good citizenship. However, the board also recognizes that school property and school time, financed by all of the people, shall not be used for political purposes. For a complete listing of allowable activities, see policy GAHB in the Covington County *School District Board Policies*.

SCHOOL PURCHASES

Purchase orders are required for the purchase of all commodities which are to be paid for with public funds and are purchased by employees of Covington County School District. Purchase requisitions must be approved by the principal/supervisor. If funds other than student activity funds are being used for payment, the purchase order must be approved by the Superintendent or a purchasing agent. Expenses incurred by purchases not authorized by the principal/superintendent will become the personal obligation of the purchaser. Certain exceptions may apply to purchases made by personnel of the maintenance, transportation, and food service departments. State purchasing laws must be observed in all cases. This includes proper bids or quotes on any purchase over \$5,000.00.

TIME CLOCK PROCEDURES

An exempt employee is defined as a certified or non-certified employee who is in a supervisory/professional position.

All exempt employees shall punch a time clock for the purpose of recording leave and keeping accurate balances of allowed leave time. Leave time is to be reported as follows based on CCSD Board Policy GBRI:

Two hours or less equals one quarter (1/4) day of absence

Over two hours to four hours equals (1/2) day of absence

All hours of absence over four hours equals (1) day of absence

TOBACCO POLICY – EMPLOYEES

The Covington County School District Board recognizes that smoking is regarded as a health hazard for smokers and non-smokers and that smoking represents a possible safety hazard to buildings and facilities. Because of the Board's responsibility to protect students, staff, visitors,

and guests of the school district and maintain a safe environment, smoking is prohibited by all staff, students, visitors, and guests in all school district buildings and district vehicles. The smoking ban is in effect 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For the purpose of this policy, smoking will include the use of tobacco, to include Vapes, cigarettes, cigars, pipes, snuff, smoking tobacco, smokeless tobacco, ecigarettes, juuls, cigars, cigarettos, electronic smoking devices (this is not an exhaustive list) including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, pipes, snuff, and chewing tobacco. See policy GBRM in the Covington County School District *Board Policies* for further information.

TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION / REIMBURSEMENT

Personnel who have been authorized by the superintendent to travel in performance of their duties shall be reimbursed. Employees will be reimbursed for normal expenses for hotel, food, registration, and transportation based upon actual cost limited to the current allowances approved by the state. The reimbursement shall not exceed current limits for meals as established by the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration and shall not exceed the current state rate for travel made in personal vehicles. Overnight stay is required for reimbursement of meals. Original receipts must be provided to the district for all travel expenses including meals and travel in personal vehicles.

The board expects employees to carpool where two or more employees are traveling to the same destination. In such an event, only one travel expense allowance at the authorized rate per mile shall be allowed for any one trip.

Detailed rules for current allowable expenses, reimbursement rates, etc. are available in the Business Office. See DJD in the Covington County *School District Board Policies*.

USE OF DISTRICT PROPERTY

Each individual teacher is held responsible for the condition of his/her classroom. It is no easy task to catch the guilty person involved in cases of defacement of school property. It is more difficult to prove a case against a suspected student. However, all teachers should check student desks from time to time and make an attempt to learn which students might have defaced a desk. Seating charts can be helpful toward this effort. It is the responsibility of all school employees to report acts of defacement. School district property, furniture, and/or equipment cannot be used for personal reasons. No personal items should be stored on school property.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES AND EXPECTATIONS

ACTIVITY FUND PROCEDURES

Activity funds describe all funds received by school officials paid or collected to participate in any school activity, such activity being part of the school program and partially financed with public funds or supplemented by public funds. The school board is authorized and empowered to promulgate rules and regulations designating for what purposes school activity funds may be expended.

For a full explanation of the fund-raising activities, purchasing requirements and fiscal management of activity funds, see DK in the Covington County *School District Board Policies*

CELL PHONE USE / TEXTING BY TEACHERS / SOCIAL MEDIA

The Board of Trustees of the Covington County School District believes that the school district was created for the primary purpose of effectively educating the children attending school within the school system. The Board further believes that to accomplish this mission, it is imperative that classroom instructional time be protected. Therefore, any activity that distracts the teacher from his or her ability to utilize the entire class period for instructional purposes is prohibited. Specifically prohibited is the use of cell telephones by teachers during class time.

Use of cell phones as part of instruction must be documented in lesson plans and have prior approval by the principal.

Further, the Covington County School District recognizes that there are many convenient and efficient means of communication available to Personnel who need to contact groups of students such as the use of Cell Phone Applications like Remind101. Personnel are encouraged to be proactive in the delivery of verbal messages in group settings during scheduled practices or events. The Covington County School District understands that group messaging in certain conditions is justifiable. **Policy IFBB**

Any employee who participates in social networking websites (like Facebook or MySpace) shall not post any inappropriate or suggestive data, documents, photos, or other information on any website that might result in a disruption of the educational environment. Social networking website passwords should not be given to students. Fraternization via the internet between school employees and students is prohibited. Access of social networking websites for individual use during school hours is prohibited. Violation of policy can result in disciplinary action including termination. This determination will be made by the Superintendent.

This policy does not prohibit school employees from using education websites that are used solely for educational purposes.

The Network Administrator may at any time review and inspect user files and e-mails. Any inappropriate behavior will be reported to the employee's supervisor.

VIOLATIONS

Alleged violations of this policy shall be discussed in a conference between the employee and the building principal. If the principal finds the violation(s) to be factual, the principal shall issue a written reprimand to the employee(s) involved. This reprimand shall become a part of the employee's personnel file. Repeated violations may result in non-renewal of an employee's contract or dismissal. Violations may result in a loss of access and/or disciplinary action. When applicable, law enforcement agencies may be involved. **Policy IFFB, GABBA**

However, the use of text messaging, instant messaging, chat rooms, email, giving or accepting

invitations to personal social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, etc., or calling/accepting calls from individual students is a dangerous practice for the supervising adult, especially when these activities take place outside the normal school day or away from school activities. These communications could easily be misconstrued to be inappropriate contact with students and could lead to dismissal and/or criminal charges. Communication with individual students by personnel through the use of these technologies is not permitted and will be viewed as evidence of inappropriate conduct towards students. Please be reminded that any discussion during and after school hours of school related issues through Facebook, Twitter, or other social media is in direct violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Each instance will be dealt with on an individual basis. (See CONFIDENTIALTY) E-mail communication or texting with your class or teams **must** be managed through a communication system whereby texts are sent to a group (team, class, etc) from the teacher and students cannot text a response. This group e-mail and group text messaging must be conducted during appropriate hours of the day.

As advances in communication technology are made, this policy should be interpreted to cover new developments in technology and new methods of written communication. Infractions with regard to communication methods not specifically identified in this policy but within the scope of what this policy is addressing will be treated as violations of this policy. It is the goal of the administrators of Covington County School District to make policy that protects students from harm and employees from liability. There the spirit of each policy and procedure should be extrapolated to varying scenarios as technology progresses. See Covington County *School District Board Policies* Policy IFBGAB

COMMUNITY / PARENTAL RELATIONS

The Covington County School District encourages appropriate community involvement, parental communication, and business partnerships by the staff in the school system. Refer to Policy GAH in the Covington County *School District Board Policies*.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Covington County School District shall operate in compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 regarding student information and records.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) have provided schools, school districts, and state educational agencies guidelines in disclosing student records. School officials with a "legitimate educational interest" in any student information can have access to educational records without specific consent of parents or eligible students. A legitimate educational interest is the person's need to know in order to:

1. Perform an administrative task required in the school employee's position description approved by the school board;
2. Perform a supervisory or instructional task directly related to the student's education; or
3. Perform a service or benefit for the student or the student's family such as health care, counseling, student job placement, or student financial aid.

However, the misuse or improper disclosure of confidential information by school officials or a third party is strictly prohibited and is punishable by federal statutes.

Electronic access to student information will be limited to job duty specifications of each employee. At no time should this information be printed, transferred, or shared under conditions other than those stipulated in FERPA. A complete explanation of FERPA may be found online at <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>.

CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES

In training for effective citizenship, it is frequently necessary for pupils to study issues that are controversial. However, any issue deemed controversial by students or parents which could create a divisive educational setting should be formally approved by the superintendent prior to use in the classroom.

When studies within the classroom create differences of opinion, teachers should implement the following:

1. Deal with the topics and issues as impartially and objectively as possible. Teachers should not intrude their own biases.
2. Handle all such topics in a manner suited to the range of knowledge, maturity, and competence of their students.
3. Have teaching materials dealing with all possible aspects of the topics readily available.
4. Not expect or require that the class reach an agreement. Differences of opinion are the rights of each citizen. Should there be a complaint about instructional materials; the Board recognizes the right of individuals regarding controversial materials used by students in the Covington County School District.

COPYRIGHT MATERIAL USE

The Covington County School District employees are responsible for obeying copyright laws and restricted use requirements set forth by publishers and manufacturers.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The code of student conduct is provided to all teachers, school personnel, students, and parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year. Each school principal is responsible for the dissemination of the district and school policies. A number of board policies are used in clearly defining the code of conduct. Parents, students, and teachers should refer to the student handbook for specific school policy. Board policies upon which school conduct codes are determined may be found in the Covington County *School District Board Manual* policies Section J.

FIELD TRIPS

1. Any field trip or educational excursion must enrich or enhance the instructional program of a school. Field trips should be tied to Standards and educational in nature. The Covington County School District specifies the following guidelines:
2. The principal must approve all field trips and excursions and shall assign an appropriate number of staff members to have adequate supervision of the students. **All out of state trips must be Board approved.**
3. Any field trip planner must insure the following tasks are completed:
 - a. Permission slips are collected for all students participating
 - b. Contact information for all parents are taken on the trip and a copy given to the building level principal
 - c. Medical information is collected for all students participating and a copy of given to the principal
 - d. Chaperone names attached to the list of students they are supervising and a copy given to the principal; all chaperones must have a background check prior to serving as a chaperone.
 - e. Schedule of arrival times and departures

- f. Receipts showing where all money was receipted into the school activity fund via the school secretary and teacher(s) that collected the money
4. All out of state travel of students must be approved by the Covington County School Board and should be requested by the principal at least one month prior to trip.
5. After approval by the principal written information pertaining to each specific field trip must be disseminated to the parents of involved students at least three school days prior to the date of the trip. For out of state travel a more extensive timeline should be followed.
6. School buses or commercial buses must be used to transport students to and from school functions. Students can not be transported by private vehicles.
7. In case of any emergency involving an accident or the health of the student, the staff member in charge shall take whatever steps necessary to provide for the needs of the students. In all cases, the parents of the student are to be contacted and apprised of the circumstances of the problem. If required, medical assistance will be sought as soon as possible pursuant to the authorization from the parent(s) on the Parent Consent form. – Covington County *School District Board Policies*.

FIRST AID

School personnel may attend to minor injuries and sickness, but only qualified personnel should attempt to administer first aid to pupils.

FIRST YEAR TEACHERS

New teachers and teachers 2nd year in the field will have an opportunity to participate in the Covington County Teacher Mentoring Program. Coaching for new teachers will address pertinent areas. Topics include but are not limited to the following:

- Legal Issues and Professional Ethics
- Parent/Teacher Conferences and Teacher Evaluation
- Alignment of Curriculum and Assessment
- Teaching Strategies
- Customized Instruction

The training sessions conclude with an evaluation that reveals what helped teachers transition into the job and how they have improved their craft. Susan Deen will oversee the Induction Program.

GRADING

Assessment must provide timely feedback on specific knowledge and skills for specific students. Teachers are encouraged to provide information to students and parents on the mastery of essential skills of the curriculum.

- Grades will be given to each student on a four-week (progress reports) and a nine-week (report cards) basis.
- Grades shall reflect a student's progress in meeting the objectives of a course's curriculum.

Teachers shall insure that students have a minimum of 4 grades recorded and included in the average at progress report. All grades will be posted by the teacher to Active Parent within 48 hours for parents to review. Transfer grades shall be accepted by the receiving school provided that the courses taken are compatible with local and state regulations. All students that transfer from a home school setting or a private school setting will be assessed using an achievement test.

Students entering the ninth grade shall be advised by the high school counselor of the method of calculating class rank and grade-point average during spring orientation of scheduling sessions. Grades used to determine class rank shall be the final grades for any course. Grades that are calculated for Honors and Special Honors are specified in the Covington County School District

Student Handbook.

The Grading Template in student software package (SAMs) must be followed by all teachers. The weighted template allows teachers to assign tasks according to the importance of the content.

Major task	60%
Minor task	30%
<u>Assignment</u>	<u>10%</u>
	75% of total average
<u>Nine Weeks Test</u>	<u>100%</u>
	25% of total average

Teachers shall maintain accurate records which show how they determined grades. The grading scale is as follows:

	<u>Grades K-6</u>	<u>Grades 7-12</u>
A	93-100	90-100
B	85-92	80-89
C	75-84	70-79
D	70-74	65-69
F	0-69	Below 65

Advanced placement and Honors courses are graded on the same scale as regular coursework; however, they are weighted at 1.02 and 1.06 depending on the course.

HOMEWORK

Homework in the Covington County School District is a necessary extension of the classroom experience. It is assigned with regularity and has a clear relationship to curriculum. The nature of the assignment varies with the needs of the student and the type and level of the lesson. The Gradual Release Model of Instruction should be used by teachers (I do, We do, Y'all do, You do). ~~In some programs it may be given to reinforce skills; in others, it may involve exploring new or related subject matter.~~ Homework should be assigned at the end of the gradual release process – when students have shown mastery of the skill and they are ready to practice independently. ~~Homework assists the students in learning how to organize time and develop good study skills.~~ The goal of homework is for students to practice the correct way to complete a problem or answer a question. Therefore, homework is not to be used to introduce new material nor used to punish students or manage behavior. Grades should not be given for an assignment that has been completed at home. This included giving a student credit for simply completing the homework assignment. ~~The amount of homework should be assigned by the teacher based on the age and developmental ability of students.~~ It is the philosophy of the Covington County School District that all children's first teachers are their parents. Based on the desire to promote family time and quality extracurricular activities for the development of the whole child, all homework assignments will be evaluated and treated as key to learning and not assigned as punishment or as busy work.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

CCSD will implement an alternate scheduling option for winter weather. In the event of ice and snow, the district could follow a "late start" schedule. All staff will be notified verbally during school hours if possible or via the news outlets and the District Facebook page. Early release schedules will be shared verbally during school hours when possible and/or news outlets and the District Facebook page.

INSTRUCTIONAL MODEL

The Covington County School District requires an instructional model designed to meet the needs of every student. The model follows the guidelines provided by the Mississippi Department of Education's Multi-Tiered Support System and shall consist of three tiers of instruction.

Tier I:	Quality classroom instruction based on MS Curriculum Frameworks and the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards
Tier II:	Focused supplemental instruction
Tier III:	Intensive interventions specifically designed to meet the individual needs of students

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 measured through progress monitoring.

MDE policy requires two (2) Tier II documented reviews, with the first documented review conducted no later than four (4) weeks after implementation and the cumulative documented review no later than 8 weeks after implementation. Parents should be informed at each review. At least two (2) integrity checks must be completed by the principal or assistant principal. Progress monitoring must occur every two weeks.

If strategies at Tier II are unsuccessful, students must be referred to the School MTSS Team prior to placement in Tier III. The school level team, in conjunction with the Intervention Specialists (where available) are responsible for developing interventions based on individual, identified student needs. Each school must have a team implemented in accordance with the process developed by the Mississippi Department of Education. The chairperson of the team shall be the school principal or principal's designee.

Interventions will be as follows:

- Designed to address the deficit areas based on individual student data;
- Evidence based;
- Implemented as designed by the school level team; and
- Supported by data regarding the effectiveness of interventions.

~~After a referral is made, the team must develop and begin implementation of an intervention(s) within one (1) week. within two (2) weeks. No later than eight (8) weeks after implementation of the intervention(s) the team must conduct a documented review of the interventions to determine success of the intervention. No later than sixteen (16) weeks after implementation of the intervention(s), a second review must be conducted to determine whether the intervention is successful. A principal must conduct two integrity checks during the implementation of the intervention. If the intervention(s) is determined to be unsuccessful, then the student will be referred to the District Support Team for further direction.~~

MDE policy requires two (2) Tier III documented reviews with the first documented review conducted no later than eight (8) weeks after implementation and the cumulative documented review no later than 16 weeks after implementation. Parents should be informed at each review. At least two (2) integrity checks must be completed by the principal or assistant principal. Progress monitoring must occur every week. If interventions are unsuccessful, the student will be referred to the District Review Team for further review.

All teachers within the Covington County School District will use information from progress monitoring to (a) determine if adequate progress is being made by students; (b) identify students

as soon as they begin to fall behind; and (c) modify instruction to ensure that students gain essential skills. Progress monitoring will be an ongoing process. If Tier 1 and Tier 2 strategies are unsuccessful, students will be referred to the school level Teacher Support Team (TST) Any student meeting the following criteria may also be referred to MTSS: Grades K – 3: a student fails one (1) grade; Grades 4 – 12: a student fails two (2) grades; a student failed either the preceding two grades and has been suspended or expelled for more than twenty (20) days in the current school year; A student scores at the lowest level on any part of the Grade 3 or Grade 7 statewide accountability assessment; or a student is promoted from Grade 3 to Grade 4 under a Good Cause Exemption in compliance with the Literacy Based Promotion Act. All Tier 3 interventions will be done with integrity; designed to address all deficit areas, research based; implemented as designed by the TST; and supported by data regarding the effectiveness of the intervention.

LICENSURE / LICENSURE RENEWAL

Educators have the professional and contractual responsibility to participate in the school district's professional development program and in professional development options for license renewal. The selection of professional development options is to be focused on improving student learning. Each educator is responsible for selecting and monitoring his/her individual professional development program. Educators are also responsible for maintaining and submitting documentation for license renewal to the Office of Educator License in the Mississippi Department of Education using the Educator Licensure Management System (ELMS). Specific questions regarding license renewal must be addressed with the appropriate staff at the Mississippi Department of Education Office of Educator License at 601-359-3483 (Fax: 601-359-2778) or visiting the MDE web site at www.mde.k12.ms.us/ed_licensure/index.html. Contact Babette Duty at the Central Office for assistance in renewing your license.

License Renewal Requirements

The license may be renewed for one five-year period beyond the present expiration date. Only credits earned from one expiration date to the next may be used for renewal (renewal cycle). Only one renewal method may be utilized during a five-year period.

Bachelor's degree or equivalent – Class A

- Ten (10) continuing education units (CEUs) in content area or job/skill related area
OR
- Three (3) semester hours in content area or job/skill related area
AND
- Five (5) continuing education units (CEUs) in content area or job/skill related area
OR
- Six (6) semester hours in content area or job/skill related area
OR
- Completion of the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards process

Master's degree or above – Class AA, Class AAA, Class AAAA

- Three (3) semester hours in content area or job/skill related area
OR
- Five (5) continuing education units (CEUs) in content area or job/skill related area
OR
- Completion of the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards process

MEDICAL ISSUES

Medication Administration

The Covington County School District recognizes that many students from time to time feel well enough and healthy enough to attend school, but may require medication during school hours. To accommodate this need and to foster better attendance in school, appropriate school personnel will administer medications to students as prescribed by their physician under the

following guidelines.

Medical Diagnosis

Teachers, administrators, counselors or any other school personnel are not qualified to make a medical diagnosis in reference to any student. This includes the medical diagnosis of ADD/ADHD. A team approach to issues of behavior or learning is best. All students exhibiting issues that impact learning should be reviewed to the school level team for review.

PARENT CONFERENCES

Each school principal will provide time for school-wide parent/teacher conferences each year. As the need for parent conferences arise throughout the year, teachers should make every effort to accommodate parents' schedules for conferences. The teacher should inform the principal of any conference in which a third party may be required to attend the conference. Teachers are required to contact parents regularly. At a minimum each student's parent should be contacted monthly by teachers of a self-contained classroom and quarterly by teachers of departmentalized classes. Documentation of parent contacts is sent to Susan Deen as part of the Title I School Wide Plan. See your building level principal for specifics.

PROMOTION / RETENTION POLICY

General Policies

1. Promotion and retention shall be based upon the mastery of objectives/ benchmarks from the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks and the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards.
2. The primary responsibility for determining each pupil's level of performance and ability to function at the next level shall be that of the classroom teacher subject to review and approval by the principal.
3. Each teacher shall ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn through the implementation of the district curriculum based on the Mississippi Frameworks and the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards. Data from the assessments identified in the district curriculum will guide instructional design.
4. A complete set of records must be maintained on each student's performance for documentation. These records must contain an account of each student's performance including any needed interventions. It is the responsibility of each teacher to identify pupils not making satisfactory progress toward achieving grade level objectives.
5. Standardized tests and Mississippi state mandated tests should be used for guidance purposes. Common Assessments should be used to adjust instruction. Progress monitoring should be used to identify students prior to completing the master schedule for best placement of students based on their strengths and weaknesses academically. Progress monitoring will also be used to inform the Tier process and to track student progress through the interventions that are put into place for Tier II and III. Intervention Programs will be used that have assessments that determine if the specific intervention is having a positive impact on each Tier III student's learning.
6. Each principal shall ensure that the school is appropriately disseminating information to the parents. This information is to include data such as student progress and minimum skills required before assignment can be made to the next grade or course level. Each school will provide the opportunity for a parent-teacher conference each semester.
7. Parents must be notified of deficiencies in academic progress no later than the middle of each quarter. **Parents must receive written notification at the end of the second quarter if there is any doubt about a student progressing to the next grade or course level. Additionally, the parents of any student who is going to be retained should receive notice at least 10 days before report cards are issued.**

FOR GRADES K – 2 THE PROMOTION RETENTION POLICY WILL BE SENT HOME THE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL YEAR 2020-2019 WITH ALL STUDENTS ALONG WITH

A LETTER THAT REQUESTS A PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE STATING THAT IT HAS BEEN READ AND UNDERSTOOD. TEACHERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KNOWING AND IMPLEMENTING THE PROMOTION/RETENTION POLICY.

Refer to Policy IHE in the Covington County *School District Board Policies* for the promotion retention policy.

REPORTS OF CHILD ABUSE / NEGLECT

Any school employee having reasonable cause to suspect that a child is neglected or abused is required by Mississippi Code of 1972 (§43-21-353) to make an oral report immediately to the school principal /designated supervisor and by telephone or otherwise to the Department of Human Services (DHS). As soon as possible thereafter, a written report must be filed with DHS. Reports must contain the names and addresses of the child and parents or other persons responsible for the child's care. If known, the child's age, nature and extent of injuries, any evidence of previous injuries, and other information pertinent to establishing cause of the injury and identity of the perpetrator should be included in the report. Reports of abuse and neglect made under this law and the identity of the reporter are confidential except when the court in its discretion determines the testimony of the person reporting to be material to a judicial proceeding. A school employee makes a required report pursuant to this law is presumed to be acting in good faith. Any person reporting in good faith is immune from civil or criminal liability. MS Code (§43-21-355)

SALARY SCHEDULE

Current year salary schedules are available to view in each school office or at the Central Office. Salary schedules are provided to all certified employees when they sign contracts annually. A current salary schedule can be found at www.mde.k12.ms.us

STUDENT CONDUCT

All employees will be provided with an explanation of both their responsibilities and their rights under law in terms of actions that they may take to maintain order, discipline, and an appropriated educational environment. A student code of conduct, developed under the leadership of the district administration, and in cooperation with staff, will be made available and distributed to parents and students outlining student conduct expectations and possible disciplinary actions, including consequences for disorderly conduct, as required by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLBA). The Covington County School District will publish a Student Handbook that details the rules of conduct for students. Policy JCA – Covington County *School District Board Policies*

WELLNESS POLICY

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.

All students in the Covington County School District shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious food choices and enjoyable physical activity choices for a lifetime. All staff in the Covington County School District are encouraged to model healthful eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life. Board Policy directs schools to effectively utilize school and community resources and to equitably serve the needs and interest of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences in culture. Policy JG – Covington County *School District Board Manual*