

**THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OSCEOLA COUNTY, FLORIDA**  
817 Bill Beck Boulevard • Kissimmee • Florida 34744-4492  
Phone: 407-870-4600 • Fax: 407-870-4010 • [www.osceolaschools.net](http://www.osceolaschools.net)



# **EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

**(formerly Faculty Handbook)**

## **2024 - 2025**

*Student Achievement – Our Number One Priority*  
*Districtwide Accreditation by the Cognia*  
*An Equal Opportunity Agency*

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## **ABSENCES/ LEAVES**

Absences from worksite will usually be classified as one of, but not limited to, the following:

### **Personal Leave**

Employees may not take a personal day without having accumulated sick leave.

Instructional employees shall be granted six (6) days of leave for personal reasons with pay per school year. Since Summer School is an extended portion beyond the regular school year, the use of personal leave shall be limited to one (1) day of the personal days in the contract.

Notification of leave for personal reasons shall be made in advance. The applicant's reason for taking leave for personal reasons shall be to state that he is taking it under the provisions of the Instructional Employees' Contract. Leave for personal reasons shall be charged to sick leave when used under this part. Instructional employees shall follow the procedures set forth for the automated substitute calling system.

Professional Support Staff employees shall be granted six (6) days of leave for personal reasons with pay per School year. Notification of leave for personal reasons shall be made in advance. The employee shall make every reasonable effort to notify the administrator by noon of the workday before the absence except when unforeseen events make such arrangements by the employee impractical. The applicant's reason for taking leave for personal reasons shall be to state that he is taking it under the provisions of the Professional Support Staff Contract. Leave for personal reasons shall be charged to sick leave when used under this part.

### **Professional Development**

Professional leave is defined as leave granted to a member of the staff to engage in activities which will result in his/her professional benefit and advancement, including earning of college credits and degrees, or that will contribute to the profession of teaching. Professional Development should be related to an Individual Professional Development Plan and the school improvement goals. The employee shall complete registration for Professional Development inservice activities through My Professional Growth System (MyPGS) prior to leaving or being absent from assigned duties. The employee may earn inservice points for completed professional development courses/ activities through MyPGS.

### **Sick Leave**

Any member of the staff who is unable to perform their duty because of a personal illness or because of the illness or death of father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, child, or other close relative, or member of his/her own household, and consequently has to be absent from work, shall be granted leave of absence for sickness. Absence because of illness beyond accumulated sick leave is considered personal leave without pay. Employees requesting unpaid leave must make an appointment with administrator prior to request.

### **Temporary Duty Elsewhere (TDE)**

When mutually agreed upon, employees may be assigned to be temporarily absent from their regular duties and places of employment for the purpose of performing other educational services, including participation in school surveys, professional meetings, field trips, etc. The employee shall complete a TDE form prior to the activity.

## **ACCIDENT – REPORTING**

### **Student**

In case of a minor injury that occurs in the classroom or on the school grounds, the adult in charge when the student has been injured will send the student to the health room and report all pertinent information to the nurse. The instructional employee in charge shall complete the Student Accident/ Incident Report prior to leaving campus for the day. The nurse shall notify the parent of the student's injury. The instructional employee may find it helpful to keep a copy of the record of any injury. To avoid charge of negligence, the instructional employee shall supervise students at all times. The Student Accident/ Incident Report (see school nurse) requires the name of the person responsible for supervision at the time of any accident.

### **School Personnel**

In case of an accident (no matter how insignificant), please notify the site administrator and/ or school or department secretary immediately so that the appropriate accident/ incident form may be filed. This step is necessary so that if a doctor's examination is needed at a later date, then there is a record of the accident/ incident. Instructional employees must always follow proper precautions to avoid accidents. For example, do not use chairs and tables for stepladders or when moving heavy objects, call a custodian. Most accidents can be avoided.

## **ACCOUNTING**

### **Collection of Money**

ALL money collected for any purpose must be deposited daily in the school's internal account. No money is to be turned into the bookkeeper unless reported on a MONIES COLLECTED FORM. Please list date, account name, account number, student's name, and a receipt number if a receipt is issued. The person who signs for the receipt books should also sign all receipts and monies collected forms. Do not send money to the office with a student or leave money in or on a desk.

ALL students should be given a receipt for money collected from them over \$5.00. An official receipt book may be obtained from the bookkeeper. These receipt books are to be used only by individuals depositing funds into the internal account. Each individual person is responsible for his/her own receipt books and receipt books are to be turned in at the end of the school year to the bookkeeper.

County policy requires all fundraising projects to be accompanied by a FUNDRAISING APPLICATION. These forms can be obtained from the bookkeeper, also. All fundraising projects must have prior approval of the administrator for activities. Following the close of the fundraiser, the financial recap portion of the fundraising application must be filled out.

NO MONEY should be left in the classroom overnight. All funds should be secured in the school safe in the main office of each school campus immediately upon completion of the activity.

### **Internal Accounts**

Internal accounts are made up of school clubs, organizations, etc. The revenue is generated by student activities, which may include yearbook sales, dance revenue, fundraising projects, and any other form of income. All funds generated by the students' activities **MUST** be processed through internal accounts.

### **Supplies and Purchases**

All supplies and services will be requisitioned through the office. Anything ordered for which the school is liable for payment must be approved **PRIOR TO** placing the order by obtaining a requisition approved and signed by Administration. This includes clubs, classes, etc. Items bought for cash **CANNOT** be reimbursed.

Check with the site bookkeeper for supplies such as chalk, markers, pens, staples, etc.

### **Field Trips**

Please Plan Ahead! The school principal must approve all field trips. Pre-approval is required to initiate the trip. Obtain an Activity Form and once approved see the bookkeeper for a field trip packet. Note that the approved bus request (for use of county school buses) **MUST** be at the Transportation Department office no less than ten (10) school days prior to the trip. All field trips, whether or not the use of school-owned buses is involved, must follow the provisions of Osceola County School Board Rules and School District procedures, and must have the approval of the Superintendent or designee. The School Board must approve all out-of-state field trips. If a nurse is required to accompany a student due to his/her medical needs, contact Health Services ten (10) days prior to scheduled trip.

The student list must also be provided to the faculty for planning purposes. We cannot exercise too much caution for the safety of school groups on trips. School buses should be used for transportation; however, small groups may use private vehicles **IF** all Board policies and regulations are met. Private vehicles must have \$100,000/ 300,000 insurance policies on file if they are used. Check with Risk Management for an approved list of vehicles. The sponsoring organization is responsible for providing evidence of insurance. Chaperones must be trained/ informed of their responsibilities and obligations and given the names of students for which they are responsible.

The cafeteria manager approval must be in advance. The cafeteria is to be notified if students will not be eating lunch at school. Students going on school trips should inquire in advance for assignments to be done while they are absent and are responsible for this work. The privilege of participating in these trips does not lessen the responsibility for completing assigned work.

A field trip permission form must be completed and signed by parents for each student for each field trip. **THESE FORMS ARE TO BE COLLECTED AND HELD BY THE INSTRUCTIONAL EMPLOYEE UNTIL AFTER THE FIELD TRIP AND THEN MAY BE PLACED FOR RETENTION. DO NOT THROW THEM AWAY.**

If an internal account will be paying for the buses, be sure to secure an internal purchase order from the bookkeeper at the same time the field trip packet is obtained. Purchase orders must be submitted for admissions, transportation, etc., with an estimated cost before the bookkeeper can accept money for a field trip. **NOTE: Students MAY NOT be transported in trucks, vans, or any vehicle on a truck chassis.**



Substitutes are not provided for instructional employees going on field trips. It is the responsibility of the sponsoring instructional employee(s) to secure supervision of any students in the eligible group who do not attend the field trip or include funds to pay for a substitute in the financial planning for the trip.

### **Fundraisers**

There are specific guidelines and rules to follow for fundraisers. All staff should check with their administrator prior to beginning a fundraiser for proper procedural paperwork.

### **AFTER HOURS ACCESS TO CAMPUS**

Students shall not remain in the building or on the ground before or after school hours unless accompanied by an instructional employee or sponsor. Instructional employees/ sponsors who work with students after school hours (clubs, play rehearsals, band practice, etc.) must not permit them to be anywhere in the building without adult supervision. Instructional employees/sponsors must be sure that all students have been picked up or have left the grounds before the instructional employee leaves.

When school is not in session, instructional employees may be given reasonable access to the building by arranging such access with the school principal in advance.

## **ALCOHOL and DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

The School District of Osceola County, Florida, maintains an alcohol and drug-free workplace per [Osceola County School Board Rule 6.33 – Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace](#).

If an employee believes they have a substance abuse problem, the School District offers the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). To qualify for the School District's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), the request from the employee must precede any action that would require drug testing which results in a positive test result (i.e., reasonable suspicion, random testing, post-accident testing).

Current employees who are required to drug test must not receive a positive result for any drug prohibited by the federal government. The federal list of prohibited drugs may be more restrictive than the Schedule of Controlled Substances prohibited by the State of Florida.

Employees should be aware of the following:

➤ Drugs are defined as any article intended for use in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease, which means including, but not limited to, the following:

- ✓ alcohol, including distilled spirits, wine, malt beverages, and intoxicating liquors;
- ✓ amphetamines;
- ✓ cannabinoids;
  - A positive test result could occur from the use of any and all products containing Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), including, but not limited to, cannabidiol (CBD) oil, lotions, gummies, and all other forms of medical marijuana which exist now or may exist in the future.
  - Over the counter cannabidiol (CBD) oils and lotions are not regulated and may contain Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) which could result in a positive test result. The origin of THC resulting in a positive test cannot be determined.
- ✓ cocaine;
- ✓ phencyclidine (PCP);
- ✓ hallucinogen;
- ✓ methaqualone;
- ✓ opiates;
- ✓ barbiturates;
- ✓ benzodiazepines;
- ✓ synthetic narcotics;
- ✓ designer drugs; or a metabolite of any of the substances listed herein or any other substances defined in Schedules I through V of the United States Controlled Substances Act.

➤ **Currently, any employee who tests positive for prohibited drugs per federal guidelines shall be recommended to the School Board for termination.**

### **Related School Board Rules**

- [2.90 – Tobacco-Free and Smoking-Free Environment](#)
- [2.95 – Wellness Program](#)
- [6.27 – Professional Ethics](#)
- [6.33 – Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace](#)

## **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)**

*Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)*, prohibits private employers, state and local governments, employment agencies and labor unions from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities in job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment. An individual with a disability is a person who:

- Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities;
- Has a record of such an impairment; or
- Is regarded as having such impairment.

A qualified employee or applicant with a disability is an individual who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the job in question. Reasonable accommodation may include, but is not limited to:

- Making existing facilities used by employees readily accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities.
- Job restructuring, modifying work schedules, reassignment to a vacant position;
- Acquiring or modifying equipment or devices; adjusting or modifying examinations, training materials, or policies; and providing qualified readers or interpreters.

An employer is required to make an accommodation to the known disability of a qualified applicant or employee if it would not impose an "undue hardship" on the operation of the employer's business. Undue hardship is defined as an action requiring significant difficulty or expense when considered with other factors such as an employer's size, financial resources, and the nature and structure of its operation.

An employer is not required to lower quality or production standards to make an accommodation, nor is an employer obligated to provide personal use items such as glasses or hearing aids.

### **Policy of Non-Discrimination**

Pursuant to *Osceola County School Board Rule 2.70 – Prohibiting Discrimination, Including Sexual and Other Forms of Harassment*, the School District of Osceola County does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to its programs, services, or activities, in access to them, in treatment of individuals with disabilities, or in any aspect of the operations. The School District of Osceola County does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its hiring or employment practices. This notice is provided as required by *Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*.

Questions, complaints, requests for additional information, or requests for ADA accommodations may be forwarded to the Chief Human Resources Officer who serves as the designated School District ADA Coordinator.

## **Application Processing Procedures**

1. An employee/ applicant requesting accommodation shall complete and submit the "Employee/Applicant Request for Accommodation" and "Medical Certification of an ADA Qualifying Event" forms to their immediate supervisor who shall forward the application to the School District ADA Coordinator.
2. The ADA Coordinator or designee shall collaborate with the employee/ applicant and immediate supervisor to evaluate and determine eligibility within the guidelines of ADA. If the ADA Coordinator determines that additional medical information is needed, the employee/ applicant shall be furnished with any forms/ questionnaires necessary for the health care provider to complete.
3. The ADA Coordinator or designee shall then coordinate with the necessary staff and employee/ applicant to determine and implement the effective, reasonable accommodation and timeframe that will enable the employee/applicant to perform their essential job functions.
4. The ADA Coordinator shall thereafter prepare a memo providing an accommodation plan for signature by the employee/ applicant and supervisor granting the accommodation and providing a format for timely or periodic review. In the event the accommodation is denied, a statement shall be issued to the employee/ applicant that explains and details the Coordinator's determination that there is no effective, reasonable accommodation that would enable the employee/ applicant to perform the essential functions of the position.

## **Appeal Process**

A reasonable accommodation under the ADA is an ongoing process. At any point in time, the individual receiving the reasonable accommodation or having an accommodation denied may request a reevaluation of the request from the Superintendent, whose decision shall be final for the School District. The employee retains all rights thereafter to file any review or complaint as allowed by and under law.

## **Confidentiality**

All medical-related information shall be kept confidential and maintained separately from other personnel records, available only under limited conditions.

## **Retention**

All "Employee/ Applicant Request for Accommodation" forms and supporting documentation that are submitted to the ADA Coordinator shall be maintained in a confidential manner in accordance with applicable federal and state mandated retention schedules.

## **ARRESTS**

All employees shall report, in writing, within 48 hours to the Superintendent or his/her designee, any arrests/charges.

## ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

It is the responsibility of every School District employee to read, understand, and comply with our School District's policies and procedures within the document [SDOC Employee Attendance Expectations](#).

All employees are expected to be present for work on *scheduled workdays* at *assigned times* unless on approved leave only when necessary.

No employee absence without authorized leave shall be accepted.

Employees who take any unauthorized leave from work shall be subject to progressive discipline up to and including dismissal in accordance with Osceola County School Board Rules and the terms and conditions of our applicable collective bargaining agreements (e.g., contracts).

To report an absence from work, instructional employees shall:

- Request a substitute through the automated substitute calling system (e.g., Frontline) *prior to seven o'clock p.m. (07:00 PM) the night before the absence* except when unforeseen events make such arrangements impractical; and
- Request the appropriate leave through the SDOC Employee Portal.

School administrators or their designees (e.g., substitute coordinators) may request, but not require, that instructional employees call to report an absence from work so that appropriate coverage for student safety, supervision, and instruction can continue efficiently.

To report an absence, all other employees shall:

- Request the appropriate leave through the SDOC Employee Portal *by noon (12:00 PM) of the workday before the absence* except when unforeseen events make such arrangements by the employee impractical; and
- Contact the employee's administrator/ supervisor.

Alleged violations of this policy shall be reported to the employee's site administrator/ supervisor for review and determination of an investigation.

Depending upon the circumstances of the allegations, the investigation may be handled at the worksite by the administrator/ supervisor, or the matter may be assigned to School District investigation through the Department of Human Resources.

Violations of this policy may result in employee discipline up to and including termination. In addition, certified educators may receive sanctions against the educator's state-issued certificate.

## **BULLYING**

In 2008, the Osceola County School Board adopted *Osceola County School Board Rule 5.321-- Prohibiting Bullying and Harassment*. According to the board policy, all School District personnel shall report any incident of bullying to the school designee. The School District of Osceola County, FL, uses the “Stop Bullying Now” campaign for bullying prevention. Information about the “Stop Bullying Now” campaign may be found at [www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov](http://www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov). To enhance the campaign, each school (K-12) has been given resources to instruct school employees and students about bullying and how to prevent it.

## **CALENDARS**

Please refer to the *Appendix* – for a list of calendars.

## **CELL PHONES (INSTRUCTIONAL EMPLOYEE)**

Telephones will be made available at all schools. The location of such phones shall be such as to ensure privacy of conversation as much as possible. Use of School District phones, cellular phones, radios, pagers, facsimile, e-mail, or other communications devices is for the sole purpose of conducting official School District business, and personal communications are discouraged and should be kept to a minimum. Work-related instructional employee-student communication should occur on School District owned devices only.

Cell phone usage and personal calls shall not interfere with direct instruction and assigned supervisory responsibilities.

[\[Instructional Employees’ Contract, Article XV, 15.07, Osceola County School Board Rules 6.32 – Telephone Calls, Electronic Communications, and Facsimiles and 6.321 – Employee Use of Cellular Phones\]](#)

## **CERTIFICATION**

It is the responsibility of the school employee to maintain all appropriate subject area certifications and endorsements required for employment. The Certification Department is available to assist with any questions or concerns regarding the employee’s certification.

## **CHARACTER EDUCATION**

[Section 1003.42 – Required instruction, Florida Statutes](#), requires instruction in character education for all students in Grades K-12. The School District of Osceola County, FL uses “Creating Character in Osceola County” as its state-approved curriculum. A character trait is assigned to each month - September through May. A monthly newsletter, which includes writing prompts, vocabulary, literature, and benchmarks for each character trait may be found on the Employee Resources section of the

School District website. Instructional employees are expected to keep documentation of lessons taught.

## **CHILD ABUSE**

Florida Statute requires that all school employees report any suspected child abuse or neglect. All employees must receive training in child abuse during their first year of employment. All employees must report any suspected child abuse or neglect to a school administrator immediately. The school principal or assistant principal shall assist employees in reporting all suspected cases of child abuse, abandonment, or neglect to the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) and compliance with state law, School Board Rules, and School District procedures. The Florida Abuse Hotline is available 24 hours/7 days a week at 1-800-96ABUSE (1-800-962-2873).

[\[Osceola County School Board Rule 2.80 – Reporting Child Abuse, Abandonment, or Neglect\]](#)

## **CHILDREN OF FACULTY/ STAFF**

The children of faculty/ staff members are not allowed to attend meetings and/ or professional development activities. Child care arrangements must be made during these events/activities and on instructional employee workdays. The Principal and/ or School District Administration shall manage any emergencies or exceptions at their discretion.

## **CIVILITY**

[Osceola County School Board Rules 6.391 – Zero Tolerance for Workplace Violence](#), [6.392 -- Employee Relations – Civility](#), and [9.63 – Civility and Orderly Conduct Among School District Employees, Parents, and the Public](#) together constitute our School District's civility policy. It is the responsibility of every School District employee to read, understand, and comply with our School District's civility policy.

It is the policy of the School District that all employees have, to the greatest extent reasonably possible, a safe, secure workplace that is free from harassment and bullying of any kind. The School District shall not tolerate bullying and harassment of any type. Conduct that constitutes bullying and harassment as defined herein and in Osceola County School Board Rules is therefore prohibited. The purposes and intent of the School District's civility policy are to:

- promote mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct among School District employees, parents, and the public (It is not the intent of the School Board, however, to deprive any person of his or her right to freedom of expression.);
- provide rules of conduct for employees that permit and encourage positive communication by and among employees, but which also identify behaviors that are unacceptable, inappropriate, and/or disruptive to the operation of the School District;
- maintain, to the greatest extent reasonably possible, a safe, secure workplace that is free from harassment and bullying of any kind for instructional employees, students, administrators, other staff, parents, and other members of the community; and
- prohibit rude, impolite, disruptive, volatile, hostile, pejorative, derisive, disparaging discriminatory, scandalous, false, threatening, or aggressive communications or actions by employees.

## **CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS**

If, for any reason, an authorized employee is having food delivered to the school for an activity, which has been approved by the administration, the authorized employee must make the receptionist aware of the delivery and arrange to have payment ready. Classes and organizations in secondary schools shall not hold picnics or parties during school hours (Reference [Osceola County School Board Rule 4.44 – School Functions](#)). An administrator must approve activities of this type before they are announced to students/ parents. No balloons or flowers should be delivered for students during the day.

## **COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS**

Communication with parents is encouraged and is an essential part of a student's success. It is the School District's expectation that all employees shall return correspondences within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt.



## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

All employees have the right to talk to the media, and the right to refrain from talking to the media. Unless the School District requests the employee to talk to the media, it should be understood that the employee is expressing the employee's own views and not necessarily those of the School District.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

All communications, reports, and records created, maintained and recorded in accordance with *Osceola County School Board Rules* shall be considered as confidential and shall be deemed to be student records and reports subject to confidentiality as specified in [Section 1002.22 – Education records and reports of K-12 students; rights of parents and students; notification; penalty, Florida Statutes](#), if the subject of a report hereunder is, or was, a student of the School District of Osceola County.

## COPYRIGHT LAWS

The School Board of Osceola County, FL, recognizes the importance of the [Copyright Law of the United States \(Title 17, United States Code\)](#) and hereby notifies all employees that a willful infringement of the law may result in disciplinary action. No school board employee may make copies of any materials protected by the *1976 Copyright Act*, effective date, January 1, 1978, except as specifically permitted by the Act.

Materials included are such items as literature, music, poetry, tests, workbooks, computer software, video tape, audio tape, film, etc. The performance or display of audio-visual works by instructors or pupils must be in the course of face-to-face teaching activities of a nonprofit educational institution, in a classroom or similar place devoted to instruction.

In the case of a motion picture, video or other audiovisual work, the performance, or display of individual images must be given by means of a copy that was lawfully obtained. If the person responsible for the performance know or had reason to believe the motion picture, video, etc., was not lawfully made it shall constitute a willful infringement of the law.

**REMEMBER: THE SCHOOL DISTRICT'S EQUIPMENT CANNOT BE USED TO DUPLICATE OR RUN ILLEGAL MATERIALS.**

[Please refer to the *Appendix* and [Osceola County School Board Rule 3.52 – Copyrighted Materials](#).]

## COURIER SERVICES

Courier Services are available daily at each school site. Please see the site bookkeeper or school secretary for the location of the courier service. Courier services are designed for interdepartmental items only and all personal correspondence should be sent via the regular United States Postal Service.

## CRISIS TEAM

The School District's Crisis Intervention Team (DCIT) was developed in response to the need for additional counseling and consultative services in times of extreme crisis. The Supervisor of Social Services supervises the DCIT. The members of the team include the following Student Services/ School District staff: school social workers, school psychologists, school nurses, School District counselors, and the school relations specialists. Contact the school administrator immediately when in need of services or for more information.

## CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION EXPECTATIONS

It is the responsibility of every School District employee to read, understand, and comply with our School District's policies and procedures for curriculum and instruction, including, but not limited to, the document [SDOC Guidance for the Instruction of Sensitive Factual Content](#).

[State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.094124 – Required Instruction Planning and Reporting, Florida Administrative Code \(FAC\)](#) [as amended June 10, 2021; excerpt] states:

*(3) As provided in Section 1003.42(2), F.S., members of instructional staff in public schools must teach the required instruction topics efficiently and faithfully, using materials that meet the highest standards of professionalism and historical accuracy.*

*(a) Efficient and faithful teaching of the required topics must be consistent with the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards and the Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards.*

*(b) Instruction on the required topics must be factual and objective, and may not suppress or distort significant historical events, such as the Holocaust, slavery, the Civil War and Reconstruction, the civil rights movement and the contributions of women, African American and Hispanic people to our country, as already provided in Section 1003.42(2), F.S. Examples of theories that distort historical events and are inconsistent with State Board approved standards include the denial or minimization of the Holocaust, and the teaching of Critical Race Theory, meaning the theory that racism is not merely the product of prejudice, but that racism is embedded in American society and its legal systems in order to uphold the supremacy of white persons. Instruction may not utilize material from the 1619 Project and may not define American history as something other than the creation of a new nation based largely on universal principles stated in the Declaration of Independence. Instruction must include the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and subsequent amendments.*

*(c) Efficient and faithful teaching further means that any discussion is appropriate for the age and maturity level of the students, and teachers serve as facilitators for student discussion and do not share their personal views or attempt to indoctrinate or persuade students to a particular point of view that is inconsistent with the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards and the Benchmarks for Excellent Student Thinking (B.E.S.T.) Standards.*

- Recent revisions to [State Board of Education Rule 6A-10.081 – Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida](#) include:

- Obligation to the student requires that the individual:

- Shall not intentionally provide classroom instruction to students in:

- ✓ **Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 8 on sexual orientation or gender identity, except when required by Sections 1003.42(2)(n)3. and 1003.46, F.S.; and in**

- ✓ **Grades 9 through 12 on sexual orientation or gender identity unless such instruction is either expressly required by state academic standards as adopted in Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C., or is part of a reproductive health course or health lesson for which a student's parent has the option to have his or her student not attend; and**

- Shall not discourage or prohibit parental notification of and involvement in critical decisions affecting a student's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being unless the individual reasonably believes that disclosure would result in abuse, abandonment, or neglect as defined in Section 39.01, F.S.; and

- Shall not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination. Discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex includes subjecting any student to training or instruction that espouses, promotes, advances, inculcates, or compels such student to believe any of the concepts listed in Section 1000.05(4)(a), Florida Statutes [which states]:

*It shall constitute discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex under this section to subject any student or employee to training or instruction that espouses, promotes, advances, inculcates, or compels such student or employee to believe any of the following concepts:*

- Members of one race, color, national origin, or sex are morally superior to members of another race, color, national origin, or sex.*
- A person, by virtue of his or her race, color, national origin, or sex, is inherently racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously.*
- A person's moral character or status as either privileged or oppressed is necessarily determined by his or her race, color, national origin, or sex.*
- Members of one race, color, national origin, or sex cannot and should not attempt to treat others without respect to race, color, national origin, or sex.*

5. *A person, by virtue of his or her race, color, national origin, or sex, bears responsibility for, or should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment because of, actions committed in the past by other members of the same race, color, national origin, or sex.*
  6. *A person, by virtue of his or her race, color, national origin, or sex, should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment to achieve diversity, equity, or inclusion.*
  7. *A person, by virtue of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, bears personal responsibility for and must feel guilt, anguish, or other forms of psychological distress because of actions, in which the person played no part, committed in the past by other members of the same race, color, national origin, or sex.*
  8. *Such virtues as merit, excellence, hard work, fairness, neutrality, objectivity, and racial colorblindness are racist or sexist, or were created by members of a particular race, color, national origin, or sex to oppress members of another race, color, national origin, or sex.*
- *Shall not violate Section 553.865(9)(b), F.S., which relates to entering restrooms and changing facilities designated for different sexes on the premises of an educational institution.*
  - *Shall not violate Section 1000.071, F.S., which relates to the use of personal titles and pronouns in educational institutions.*
  - *The school principal shall not prevent, direct school personnel to prevent, or allow school personnel to prevent students from accessing any material used in a classroom, made available in a school or classroom library, or included on a reading list unless:*
    - *the school principal or his or her designee has reviewed the material and determines it violates the prohibitions in Section 1006.28(2)(a)2., F.S.;*
    - *the material is unavailable to students based upon school board policies adopted to implement Section 1006.28(2)(d), F.S.; or*
    - *it was determined under the School District's objection process adopted to implement Section 1006.28(2)(a)2., F.S., that the material violated one of the prohibitions in that section.*

**SDOC Expectations for Classroom Instruction of Sensitive Factual Content**

**To ensure that our school district is in full compliance with state law, we have developed the following expectations for SDOC educators:**

1. Follow our guaranteed and viable curriculum for instruction in the state standards – our Curriculum Unit Plans (CUPs);
2. Use our School District's adopted instructional and supplemental materials;
3. Collaborate with Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) on appropriate instructional methods and strategies;
4. Request assistance from academic coaches, School District resource teachers, and/ or school administrators if there are questions or concerns about instructional content;
5. Always provide instruction in an unbiased manner;
6. Notify your school principal prior to instruction on any content that may be considered by a prudent person to be controversial within prevailing Osceola County or school community standards;
7. Present both sides of any content that may be considered by a prudent person to be controversial within prevailing Osceola County or school community standards; and
8. Inform guest speakers about the School District's expectations for compliance with related School Board policies and state laws [e.g., *Osceola County School Board Rule 4.45 – Speaker Guidelines*; *State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.094124 – Required Instruction Planning and Reporting, Florida Administrative Code (FAC)*]; and
9. Collaborate with School Guidance Counselors and Social Workers to:
  - use appropriate de-escalation techniques for managing difficult conversations about sensitive content in the classroom; and
  - make guidance referrals when student needs require this action.

**Additional Policies and Contract Language that Govern Classroom Instruction of Sensitive Factual Content**

**1. State Board of Education Rule 6A-10.081 – Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida, Florida Administrative Code (FAC)**

*(a) Obligation to the student requires that the individual:*

- 1. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning and/or to the student's mental and/or physical health and/or safety.*
- 2. Shall not unreasonably restrain a student from independent action in pursuit of learning.*
- 3. Shall not unreasonably deny a student access to diverse points of view.*
- 4. Shall not intentionally suppress or distort subject matter relevant to a student's academic program.*

**2. Osceola County School Board Rule 4.10 – Curriculum**

*V. The responsibility and right of an instructional staff member to present information of a controversial nature is hereby recognized. The teacher shall not present controversial material or issues which are not directly or closely related to the subject area being taught. In presenting controversial materials on an issue, the teacher shall present all sides of the question without bias or prejudice and shall permit each student to arrive at his or her own conclusions.*

**3. Article XI: Academic Freedom, SDOC Instructional Employees' Contract**

*11.01 The Board and the Association agree that Academic Freedom is a fundamental ingredient in the fulfillment of the goals and objectives of the Osceola County Public Schools and the parties acknowledge the need to protect employees from improper censorship or restraint. Therefore, teachers shall have all reasonable freedom within the limitations imposed by law, the State Board of Education regulations, and School Board rules, in the development and implementation of the curriculum, including the right to select useful and relevant materials and determine the class needs as they relate to the curriculum. However, this does not exclude the right and obligation of the principal or supervisor to reasonably question, consult with the teacher about same, and direct whenever necessary, within limitations imposed by law, State Board of Education regulations, and School Board rules and regulations.*

*11.02 Teachers shall be entitled to freedom of discussion without censorship, within the classroom, on all matters that are relevant to the subject matter and level of the students and within their area of professional competence and assignment.*

*11.03 Teachers shall notify the administration when they intend to inject or have injected into units subject matter that might be reasonably anticipated to be controversial.*

*Alleged violations of this policy shall be reported to the employee's site administrator/ supervisor for review and determination of an investigation.*

Depending upon the circumstances of the allegations, the investigation may be handled at the worksite by the administrator/ supervisor, or the matter may be assigned to School District investigation through the Department of Human Resources.

Violations of this policy may result in employee discipline up to and including termination. In addition, certified educators may receive sanctions against the educator's state-issued certificate.

### **DRESS CODE – INSTRUCTIONAL EMPLOYEES**

Instructional employees should be generally neat in appearance, grooming, and dress. Instructional employee dress should not interfere with the learning environment or present safety concerns.

[\[Instructional Employees' Contract, Article V, 5.22\]](#)

### **DRESS CODE – PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT STAFF EMPLOYEES/ OTHER STAFF**

Instructional employees should be generally neat in appearance, grooming, and dress. Instructional employee dress should not interfere with the learning environment or present safety concerns.

[\[Education Support Professionals\), Article II, Section F.\]](#)

### **DUE PROCESS (INSTRUCTIONAL EMPLOYEES)**

All instructional employees shall be guaranteed due process and no disciplinary action shall be taken without just cause.

[\[Instructional Employees' Contract, Article IV, 4.23\]](#)

### **EARLY DISMISSAL – WEDNESDAY**

On Wednesdays, students leave campus one hour earlier. This is to facilitate professional learning communities and professional development opportunities. In months during the school year where a fifth early release Wednesday occurs, this fifth Wednesday shall be reserved for classroom instructional employees to have individual planning time at their worksites.

Only an administrator can excuse an employee from a Wednesday meeting. Employees should make appointments during non-working hours. It is School District policy that staff members must sign out in the site office if they leave school grounds other than the regularly scheduled times. Staff members must have an administrator's signature to leave campus during school hours.



## ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

The School District provides access to a variety of electronic resources to assist students and instructional employees. Students and employees will use Classlink to access the programs and resources. Some of the resources available include: Canvas, Office365, Discovery Education, MackinVia and Gale eBooks for staff and students, Beanstack for reading motivation and classroom libraries, TeachingBooks.net, Typing.com, **Britannica School, PebbleGo (grades K-5), and NatGeo (grades K-8)**. If the instructional employee has trouble accessing the resources, the school media specialist can provide assistance, or the instructional employee should create **a ticket in Incident IQ for assistance** and include the name of the program and a description of the issue accessing the resource.

## E-MAIL USAGE

All employees are required to follow the School District Network Acceptable Use policy. School District business conducted by e-mail must be done using the e-mail account that the School District supplies. When an employee conducts official business of the School District via e-mail, the employee must retain a copy of the e-mail including attachments in paper form or store these documents electronically on School District owned equipment in accordance with the Florida Public Records law and the School District Records Management Manual.

The e-mail system and the hardware are owned by the School District and are intended for School District business use. Employees are required to use the School District e-mail signature format (Osceola County School Board Rule 8.60 – Network Acceptable Use, IX.A.). Minor personal use of e-mail and the Internet by School District employees is acceptable but should not interfere or conflict with School District business.

All employees should check their email accounts three (3) times during the contractual workday (e.g., before school, during planning period, and after school).

[\[Osceola County School Board Rule 8.60\]](#)

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES (ACTIVE SHOOTER/ LOCKDOWN, FIRE, TORNADO, and SEVERE WEATHER)

It is everyone's responsibility to ensure the safety and well-being of our students while students are on School Board property. Pursuant to [Osceola County School Board Rule 3.40 – Safe and Secure Schools](#), active shooter/ lockdown, fire, and severe weather emergency drills shall be conducted throughout the school year to ensure that everyone on campus is familiar with the safety procedures. Instructional employees should refer to the *Emergency Action Guides for Instructional Employees* binder for detailed instructions on emergency procedures as well as details provided by school administrators.



## **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)**

### **Introduction**

- The School District of Osceola County's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a valuable part of the School District's employee benefits package. The program is a resource that employees can voluntarily turn to for help in dealing with personal and work-related problems. At the direction of the Chief Human Resources Officer, the program also performs "employee involuntary evaluations" as to determine employee fitness for duty.
- Benefits are provided through the School District's approved vendor. Internal services are prepaid by the employer and offered as a benefit to employees and their families.
- EAP offers confidential, short-term counseling that is solution focused. Where necessary EAP counselors provide guidance and referral services to secure quality care for long term problems.
- EAP provides live telephone counseling. When inpatient treatment is required, EAP's inpatient network provides quality discounted inpatient services that are carefully monitored by EAP's case management team.

### **Differences between the VOLUNTARY and INVOLUNTARY EAP Programs**

- The Voluntary EAP is accessed by the employee or covered person on a voluntary basis. The School District receives no information of EAP services being provided to the employee or covered person. In this way, the Voluntary EAP is an employee resource for employee use. Administrators may present information about the availability of the program or even recommend the program, but the access remains both confidential and of employee choice.
- The Involuntary EAP Program is accessed by a directive to the employee from the Chief Human Resources Officer mandating that the employee contact, attend, and comply with a predetermined scope of EAP evaluations for services. A recommendation for EAP evaluation services must be made to the Chief Human Resources Officer before it is broached with the employee. The scope may include evaluation of physical and emotional matters as a part of a fitness for duty. The EAP investigation or inquiry remains interactively confidential and private, except that the Chief Human Resources Officer receives conclusory information from EAP attesting to the employee's attendance and compliance with the program, and a final report of a determination made, as in fitness for duty, or as in closure of services on the determination that services are no longer necessary.

### **Who Is Eligible**

- Employees: All full-time and part-time employees.
- Employee Dependents:
  - Anyone who resides in the employee's house;
  - Employee's spouse/ significant other;
  - Employee's unmarried dependent children (including dependents of divorced employees not living in the employee's household);
  - Dependents who are full-time college students; and
  - Surviving family members (within the same household) are eligible for services for 60 days following an employee's death.

### Who Pays for Services

- The School District of Osceola County fully pays for this employee benefit. (However, any cost for other services recommended by the EAP counselor is the employee's responsibility but may be covered by the employee's medical plan.)

**When Coverage Begins:** On employee's first day of work.

**When Coverage Ends:** Thirty (30) days after termination of employment, or when the plan terminates

### Benefit Coverage

- Telephone crisis intervention
- Short-term counseling, as the term suggests, is the resolution of a problem within a brief period of time.

### Issues EAP Can Help With

Emotional wellbeing	Parenting problems	Addiction & Recovery
Stress/ depression	Domestic violence	Alcohol
Grief and loss	Work issues	Drugs
Anger management	Coworker relationships	Gambling
Family Matters	Job burnout	Eating disorders
Marital issues	Work-related stress	Legal
Divorce issues	Performance concerns	Financial Issues
		Legal and Financial Services

### Legal Access Plans

- Free one half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) hour legal consultation by phone or in person;
- Free one half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) hour financial consultation (via phone);
- Victims of identity theft are eligible for a free one half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) hour phone consultation with an identity theft counselor;
- Financial Planning for retirement, saving for college, and other saving/ investment issues;
- Simple Wills prepared at no cost;
- Documentation review [up to six (6) pages];
- Complete online Legal Information Resource Center; and
- Online Identity Theft prevention resource library.

### Debt Management

Assistance Services include:

- Free financial counseling (by phone) with a certified counselor who will review budget and billing information and make recommendations;
- Free financial literacy program and online or printed educational material; and
- If appropriate, a Debt Management Plan to lower credit card interest rates and payments.

### More Benefit Information

Employees should know that the EAP is designed to provide early identification of personal problems and concerns, the motivation to address those concerns, and when appropriate, referral to community or therapeutic resources. An EAP representative is available to provide short-term counseling to determine employee needs and to address immediate concerns. Short-term counseling uses a problem focused outpatient approach. This EAP benefit is not designed to provide long-term therapy or intensive treatment directly. Employee medical plan is designed to provide those benefits.

### Medical Coverage for Certain Treatments

In some situations, the EAP may recommend counseling or treatment that is not provided by the EAP. Treatment for these problems may be covered through the employee medical benefit plan if the services are medically necessary and within the terms of the employee medical benefit plan option.

### Confidentiality

Using the EAP will not jeopardize employee current employment status or advancement opportunity. Employee discussions with the EAP representatives over the telephone and in counseling sessions are confidential and private. No information about the use of EAP services will be provided to anyone unless the individual provides written permission to do so or as required by all state and federal confidentiality laws.

### Statement of HIPAA Rights

As a participant in the Plan, employees are entitled to certain rights and protections under the *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA)*. Generally, the Plan is required to protect the confidentiality of employee individually identifiable health information.

## EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

- All SDOC employees are required to complete the SDOC Employee Orientation every year as a condition of employment.
- The *SDOC Employee Orientation* is a **general overview** of essential policies, procedures, and expectations for employees.
- Employees may be required to complete **additional training** related to the employee's specific work assignment and/ or job tasks.
- More information about the [SDOC Employee Orientation](#) annual requirement may be found on the [SDOC Employee Orientation](#) webpage of the SDOC public website.

## **EQUITY POLICY**

Osceola County School Board Rule 2.70 – Prohibiting Discrimination, Including Sexual and Other Forms of Harassment prohibits discrimination and harassment.

- No person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, marital status, disability, political or religious beliefs, national or ethnic origin, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, or pregnancy be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity, or in any employment conditions or practices conducted by this School District, except as provided by law.
- The School Board shall comply with all state and federal laws, which prohibit discrimination and are designed to protect the civil rights of applicants, employees, students, or other persons or organizations protected by applicable law.
- The School Board shall admit students to the School District's schools, programs, and classes without regard to race, color, religion, gender, age, marital status, disability, political or religious beliefs, national or ethnic origin, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, or pregnancy.

### **Policy Against Sexual Harassment or Other Forms of Harassment Prohibited by Law**

- The School Board desires to maintain an academic and work environment in which all employees, volunteers, and students are treated with respect and dignity. A vital element of this atmosphere is the School Board's commitment to equal opportunities and the prohibition of discriminatory practices. The School Board's prohibition against discriminatory practices includes prohibitions against sexual harassment, or any other form of harassment based upon a person's membership in a protected class and specifically prohibited by applicable state or federal law. The School Board forbids sexual harassment, or any other form of illegal harassment, of any employee, student, volunteer, or visitor. The School Board shall not tolerate sexual harassment, or any other form of illegal harassment by any of its employees, students, volunteers, or agents.
- The prohibition against discrimination including sexual and other forms of illegal harassment shall also apply to non-employee volunteers who work subject to the control of school authorities, and to all vendors or service providers who have access to School Board facilities.

### **Definition of Sexual Harassment**

- Prohibited sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
  - Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of an individual's employment, academic status, or progress.
  - Submission to or rejection of the conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting the individual.
  - The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact on the individual's academic performance or employment, unreasonably interfering with the individual's education or

employment, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational or employment environment.

- Submission to or rejection of the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding any term or condition of employment, employment or academic benefits, or services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through the school.
- Types of conduct which are prohibited in the School District, and which may constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:
  - Graphic verbal comments about an individual's body or appearance;
  - Sexual jokes, notes, stories, drawings, pictures, or gestures;
  - Sexual slurs, leering, threats, abusive words, derogatory comments, or sexually degrading descriptions;
  - Unwelcome sexual flirtations or propositions for sexual activity or unwelcome demands for sexual favors, including but not limited to repeated unwelcome requests for dates;
  - Spreading sexual rumors;
  - Touching an individual's body or clothes (including one's own) in a sexual way, including, but not limited to, grabbing, brushing against, patting, pinching, bumping, rubbing, kissing, and fondling;
  - Cornering or blocking normal movements; and/ or
  - Displaying sexually suggestive drawings, pictures, written materials, and objects in the educational environment.

#### **Definition of Other Forms of Prohibited Harassment**

- Illegal harassment on the basis of any other characteristic protected by state or federal law is strictly prohibited. This includes verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/ her race, color, religion, gender, age, marital status, disability, political or religious beliefs, national or ethnic origin, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, or any other characteristic protected by law and that:
  - Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or academic environment;
  - Has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work or academic performance; or
  - Otherwise, adversely affects an individual's employment or academic performance.
- Examples of prohibited actions, which may constitute harassment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Epithets, slurs, or negative stereotyping;
- Threatening, intimidating or hostile acts, such as stalking; and/ or
- Written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group and that is placed on walls or elsewhere on the school or School District office premises or circulated in the workplace or academic environment.

### **Retaliation Prohibited**

- Any act of retaliation against an individual who files a complaint alleging a violation of the School District's anti-discrimination policy and/ or sexual or illegal harassment policy or who participates in the investigation of a discrimination complaint is prohibited.
- Retaliation may include, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment based upon participation in the investigation if, or filing a complaint of, discrimination.

### **Procedures for Filing Complaint of Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, or Other Form of Illegal Harassment**

#### **Procedures for Filing Complaints**

- Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against, or placed in a hostile environment based on race, color, religion, gender, age, marital status, disability, political or religious beliefs, national or ethnic origin, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity, or pregnancy by an employee, volunteer, agent or student of the School District should within sixty (60) days of alleged occurrence file a written or oral complaint. The complaint should set forth a description of the alleged discriminatory actions/ harassment, the time frame in which the alleged discrimination occurred, the person or persons involved in the alleged discriminatory actions, and any witnesses or other evidence relevant to the allegations in the complaint.
- The complaint should be filed with the School Principal, Site Administrator, or supervisor. Complaints filed with the Principal, Site Administrator, or supervisor must be forwarded to the School District's EEO Officer within five (5) days of the filing of the complaint. If the complaint is against the principal or site administrator, the complaint may be filed directly with the EEO officer.
- If the complaint is against the School District's EEO Officer, the Superintendent, or other member of the School Board, the complaint may be filed with the School Board Attorney.

#### **Procedures for Processing Complaints**

- Complaints filed against persons other than the Superintendent or member of the School Board:
- Upon receipt of the written complaint by the School District EEO Officer, the School District EEO Officer shall appoint an investigator to conduct an investigation of the allegations in the complaint. The investigator shall interview the complainant and the accused; interview any witnesses identified by the complainant, accused, or by other sources; take statements from all witnesses; and review any relevant documents or other evidence. Upon completing a review of all evidence relevant to the complaint, the investigator shall prepare a written summary of the investigation and make a

recommendation to the School District EEO Officer as to whether there is reasonable cause to believe a violation of the School District's antidiscrimination policy has occurred. Copies of documents, evidence and witness statements which were considered in the investigation must be sent to the EEO officer along with the summary and recommendation.

- If the complaint is against the EEO officer, the School Board Attorney shall appoint an investigator, who shall conduct an investigation in the manner set forth in section VI.B.1.a.
- The investigation, summary, relevant documents, witnesses' statements, and recommendation should be completed and forwarded to the EEO Officer within thirty (30) days, or to the School Board Attorney within thirty (30) days if the complaint is against the EEO Officer. The EEO Officer, or School Board Attorney, respectively, shall review the investigation summary, evidence, and recommendation, and determine within ten (10) days whether there is reasonable cause to believe a discriminatory practice occurred.
- If the EEO Officer or School Board Attorney determines there is reasonable cause to believe a violation of the nondiscriminatory policy occurred, he or she shall within ten (10) days provide notice of the reasonable cause finding to the complainant and the accused. The EEO Officer or School Board Attorney shall then forward the investigatory file, reasonable cause determination, and all related documents and evidence, to the Superintendent.
- If the EEO Officer or School Board Attorney determines, after a review of the investigation, summary, recommendation, and other evidence, that there is no reasonable cause to believe a discriminatory practice occurred, he or she shall provide within ten (10) days a notice of the finding of no reasonable cause to the complainant and accused.
- The complainant may request a no reasonable cause finding by the EEO Officer or School Board Attorney be reviewed by the Superintendent within ten (10) days of receipt of this notice. The complainant shall provide a written statement detailing facts in support of his or her disagreement with the determination. The complainant will also be given an opportunity to meet with the Superintendent and EEO Officer/School Board Attorney to present his or her position. The Superintendent and EEO Officer/School Board Attorney shall prepare a written memorandum summarizing the content of the conference to be included in the complaint file. The Superintendent shall within ten (10) days of receipt of the notice make a final determination as to whether there is reasonable cause to believe a discriminatory practice occurred.
- If review by the Superintendent is not timely requested, the EEO Officer or School Board Attorney's determination of no reasonable cause shall be final.
- The accused may request, within ten (10) days of receipt of a notice of a finding of reasonable cause, that the determination be reviewed by the Superintendent. The request must include a written statement expressing the accused's position on the complaint and findings, and address any facts, statements, or evidence which he or she submits are inaccurate. The accused will be given an opportunity to meet with the Superintendent and the EEO Officer/School Board Attorney to present his or her position. The Superintendent and EEO Officer/School Board Attorney must within ten (10) days of receipt of the notice prepare a memorandum summarizing the content of the meeting to be included in the complaint file.



- After providing the opportunity for an informal hearing as referenced in section VI.B.1.h., the Superintendent shall evaluate all the evidence, the investigation summary, recommendations, and findings, along with any input by the accused and complainant, and make a final determination as to whether there is reasonable cause to support the complainant's allegations. He or she shall then determine any necessary disciplinary, remedial, or other action. Notice of the final disposition of the complaint and any disciplinary and/or remedial action shall within twenty (20) days of the informal hearing be forwarded to the accused and the complainant, and a copy of the notice will be filed with and maintained in the office of the School District EEO Officer and the Director of Human Resources and Employee Relations.

### **Complaints against School Board Members or against the Superintendent**

- Complaints against School Board Members or the Superintendent shall be filed with the School Board Attorney. The School Board Attorney shall within twenty (20) days appoint an outside, independent investigator to conduct an investigation and make a recommendation as to whether a discriminatory practice has occurred. It is recommended, but not mandatory, that the investigator be an attorney familiar with federal and state law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of a protected status.
- The complainant and accused shall be interviewed by the outside investigator. Both shall provide written lists of witnesses to be interviewed, and documents or other evidence to be reviewed as relevant to the complaint. The investigator shall interview all witnesses identified by the complainant or accused, in addition to witnesses with relevant knowledge which the investigator may discover from other sources. The investigator shall also review relevant documents and other evidence. The investigator shall within twenty (20) days of receiving the complaint prepare a written summary of his or her investigation, and a recommendation to the School Board Attorney as to whether there is reasonable cause to believe that a discriminatory practice may have occurred.
- If reasonable cause is recommended by the investigator against a School Board Member the recommendation shall within twenty (20) days be forwarded to the Governor's office to determine if there is evidence that a misfeasance or malfeasance of office occurred. The Governor's office will be responsible for taking any necessary action in accordance with applicable law with reference to an elected official. The School Board shall receive and make the final determination if the Superintendent is appointed by the Board.
- A finding of no reasonable cause by the outside investigator, which is reviewed and confirmed by the School Board Attorney, shall be final. In compliance with Florida Statute, the investigation file shall become public record and the Superintendent or School Board Member shall answer to their constituency.

### **Penalties for Confirmed Discrimination or Harassment**

- Student – A substantiated allegation of discrimination or harassment against a student shall subject that student to disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct.
- Employee or Volunteer – A substantiated allegation of discrimination or harassment against an employee may result in disciplinary actions including termination and referral to appropriate law



enforcement authorities. A volunteer shall be removed from service and a referral may be made to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

### **Limited Exemption from Public Records Act and Notification of Parents of Minors**

- To the extent possible, complaints shall be treated as confidential and in accordance with *Florida Statutes* and the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)*. Limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation as described above. The School District's obligation to investigation and take corrective action may supersede an individual's right to privacy
- The parents of a person under the age of eighteen (18) who has filed a complaint of discrimination and/or harassment shall be notified within three (3) days of receipt of a complaint.

## ETHICS

- An effective educational program requires the services of employees who reflect:
  - integrity,
  - high expectations, and
  - human understanding.
- All School District employees shall be expected to maintain and promote these qualities.
- [Section 1001.42, Florida Statutes](#), requires that all instructional and administrative personnel must be trained on ethics.
- The School Board shall also expect administrative, instructional, and support staff members to adhere to [State Board of Education Rule 6A-10.081 – Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida](#).
- *The Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida* are the foundation for all School District and worksite operations.
- Recent revisions to [State Board of Education Rule 6A-10.081 – Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida](#) include:
  - *Obligation to the student requires that the individual:*
    - Shall not intentionally provide classroom instruction to students in:
      - ✓ **Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 8 on sexual orientation or gender identity, except when required by Sections 1003.42(2)(n)3. and 1003.46, F.S.; and in**
      - ✓ **Grades 9 through 12 on sexual orientation or gender identity unless such instruction is either expressly required by state academic standards as adopted in Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C., or is part of a reproductive health course or health lesson for which a student's parent has the option to have his or her student not attend; and**
    - Shall not discourage or prohibit parental notification of and involvement in critical decisions affecting a student's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being unless the individual reasonably believes that disclosure would result in abuse, abandonment, or neglect as defined in Section 39.01, F.S.; and
    - Shall not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination. Discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex includes subjecting any student to training or instruction that espouses, promotes, advances, inculcates, or compels such student to believe any of the concepts listed in Section 1000.05(4)(a), Florida Statutes [which states]:

*It shall constitute discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex under this section to subject any student or employee to training or instruction that espouses, promotes, advances, inculcates, or compels such student or employee to believe any of the following concepts:*

- 9. Members of one race, color, national origin, or sex are morally superior to members of another race, color, national origin, or sex.*
  - 10. A person, by virtue of his or her race, color, national origin, or sex, is inherently racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously.*
  - 11. A person's moral character or status as either privileged or oppressed is necessarily determined by his or her race, color, national origin, or sex.*
  - 12. Members of one race, color, national origin, or sex cannot and should not attempt to treat others without respect to race, color, national origin, or sex.*
  - 13. A person, by virtue of his or her race, color, national origin, or sex, bears responsibility for, or should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment because of, actions committed in the past by other members of the same race, color, national origin, or sex.*
  - 14. A person, by virtue of his or her race, color, national origin, or sex, should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment to achieve diversity, equity, or inclusion.*
  - 15. A person, by virtue of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, bears personal responsibility for and must feel guilt, anguish, or other forms of psychological distress because of actions, in which the person played no part, committed in the past by other members of the same race, color, national origin, or sex.*
  - 16. Such virtues as merit, excellence, hard work, fairness, neutrality, objectivity, and racial colorblindness are racist or sexist, or were created by members of a particular race, color, national origin, or sex to oppress members of another race, color, national origin, or sex.*
- *Shall not violate Section 553.865(9)(b), F.S., which relates to entering restrooms and changing facilities designated for different sexes on the premises of an educational institution.*
  - *Shall not violate Section 1000.071, F.S., which relates to the use of personal titles and pronouns in educational institutions.*
  - *The school principal shall not prevent, direct school personnel to prevent, or allow school personnel to prevent students from accessing any material used in a classroom, made available in a school or classroom library, or included on a reading list unless:*
    - *the school principal or his or her designee has reviewed the material and determines it violates the prohibitions in Section 1006.28(2)(a)2., F.S.;*

- the material is unavailable to students based upon school board policies adopted to implement Section 1006.28(2)(d), F.S.; or
- it was determined under the School District's objection process adopted to implement Section 1006.28(2)(a)2., F.S., that the material violated one of the prohibitions in that section.
- **Osceola County School Board Rule 6.12 – Nepotism** requires that the School Board shall not employ two (2) or more close relatives or family members where one (1) individual is the immediate supervisor of another relative or family member. Such close relatives or family members are defined as: father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, or half-sister.
- Pursuant to **Section 1006.07 – District school board duties relating to student discipline and school safety, Florida Statutes**, and **Osceola County School Board Rule 3.40 – Safe and Secure Schools**, **school entrance and classroom doors shall be closed and locked at all times when students are present on campus.** To clarify, employees shall not prop doors open or leave doors unlocked while students are present.
- Alleged violations of professional ethics, including, but not limited to, *State Board of Education Rule 6A10.081 Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida* and *Osceola County School Board Rule 6.12 – Nepotism*, shall be reported to the employee's site administrator/supervisor **and** the Chief Human Resources Officer for review and determination of an investigation.
- Depending on the circumstances of the allegations, the investigation may be handled at the worksite by the administrator/ supervisor, or the matter may be assigned to School District investigation through the Department of Human Resources.
- Employees are required to review and comply with the document entitled *State Board of Education Rule 6A-10.081 – Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida* and the resources linked to the *Professional Ethics Resources* section of the *Employee Orientation Companion Guide*.
- **Violations of this policy may result in employee discipline up to and including termination. In addition, certified educators may receive sanctions against the educator's state-issued certificate.**

## **Professional Ethics Resources**

### **Essential Resources**

- [SDOC Professional Ethics](#)
- [Reporting Misconduct and Abuse](#)
- [Ethics in Education Act Resources](#)
- [SDOC Employees, Political Activities, and the Law](#)
- [Required Instruction Resources](#)
- [Individual Freedom Act Resources](#)
- [Ethics Complaint Report Form](#)
- [Harassment/ Discrimination Complaint Report Form](#)

### **Osceola County School Board Rules**

- [3.40 – Safe and Secure Schools](#)
- [6.12 – Nepotism](#)
- [6.27 – Professional Ethics](#)
- [6.29 – Reporting of Misconduct](#)
- [6.30 – Violation of Local, State, or Federal Laws](#)
- [6.39 – Reporting Unlawful Acts](#)
- [6.75 – Whistleblower Protection](#)

### **State Board of Education Rules**

- [6A-5.056 – Criteria for Suspension and Dismissal](#)
- [6A-10.081 – Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida](#)
- [6A-10.083 – Standards Relating to Gross Immorality and Acts of Moral Turpitude](#)

### **Florida Statutes**

- [Chapter 119 – Public Records](#)
- [Chapter 286 – Public Business – Miscellaneous Provisions](#)
- [Chapter 1014 – Parents' Bill of Rights](#)
- [Section 1001.42 – Powers and duties of district school board](#)
- [Section 1003.41 – State Academic Standards](#)
- [Section 1006.07 – District school board duties relating to student discipline and school safety](#)

### **Florida Commission on Ethics Resources**

- [Disclosures Required by Gifts Law](#)
- [Guide to the Sunshine Amendment and the Code of Ethics, 2021](#)
- [Honoraria Law](#)
- [Overview of Laws Relating to Things of Value, Gifts, and Expenditures](#)

### **Florida Government in the Sunshine Law Resources**

- [Government in the Sunshine Manual, 2022](#)
- [Sunshine Law \(Open Government\) Overview](#)

## **FACULTY MEETINGS**

Faculty meetings shall be held within the instructional employee's regular workday. Instructional employees are requested not to schedule student or parent conferences, student assistance, etc. during faculty meeting times.

## **GIFTS**

*Gift* means anything accepted by a person or on that person's behalf, whether directly or indirectly, for that person's benefit, and for which equal or greater consideration is not given. The term includes real property, tangible personal property or the use of such property; a preferential rate or term on a transaction which is not available to others similarly situated; forgiveness of a debt; transportation (unless provided by an agency in relation to officially approved governmental business); lodging; parking; food or beverage, including a meal which is consumed at single sitting or event; dues, fees, and tickets; plants and flowers; personal services for which a fee is normally charged by the provider; and any other thing or service having an attributable value. The term gift does not include salary, benefits, services, fees, gifts, commissions, or expenses associated primarily with one's employment as an officer or director of a corporation or organization; campaign contributions or expenditures pursuant to the election laws; an honorarium or honorarium expense; an award, plaque, or certificate given in recognition of public, civic, charitable or professional service; honorary membership in a service or fraternal organization; and the use of a public facility or public property made available by a governmental agency for public purpose.

*Lobbyist* means any individual, firm, association, partnership, corporation or any other such group who, for compensation, seeks or sought during the preceding twelve (12) months, to influence the governmental decision-making, or to encourage the passage, defeat, or modification of any proposal or recommendation by the employee or the School Board.

### **Solicitation and Acceptance of Gifts**

An employee shall not solicit or accept a gift from any lobbyist or person, natural or corporate, doing business or soliciting business with the School Board or any public school within the District based upon any understanding that the vote, official action, or judgment of the employee would be influenced thereby.

An employee is prohibited from accepting a gift with a value equal to or in excess of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) from any lobbyist or person, natural or corporate, doing business or soliciting business with the School Board or any public school within the District.

An employee may accept a gift with a value that is less than one hundred dollars (\$100.00) from any lobbyist or person, natural or corporate, doing business or soliciting business with the School Board or any public school within the District, if it is reported in writing to the Superintendent and reported to the Commission on Ethics as required under Florida Law. An employee need not report a gift in value equal to or less than twenty-five dollars (\$25.00). Gifts or bonuses which are advertised as accompanying a purchase of goods, materials, or equipment of any kind and ordered in the name of the school, District, students or employees of the School Board may be accepted, providing such gifts or bonuses become and remain the property of the school or the District.

**Exception:**

In order to comply with the requirements of the federal E-Rate program, an employee is prohibited from accepting any one (1) gift with a retail value greater than twenty dollars (\$20.00) [or any combination of separate gifts with a retail value equal to or less than twenty dollars (\$20) each that when combined are greater than fifty dollars (\$50.00) in the aggregate per fiscal year] from any lobbyist or person, natural or corporate, doing business or soliciting business with the School Board (or any public school within the School District) to provide any eligible products or services on the official list posted on the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) website [e.g., <https://www.usac.org/e-rate/applicant-process/before-you-begin/eligible-services-list/>]. The USAC administers the Universal Service Fund under the direction of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

This rule shall not act to prohibit the acceptance of gifts from those persons who are not lobbyists or persons, natural or corporate, doing business or soliciting business with the School Board or any public school within the District.

The willful violation of this rule by any employee shall be cause for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

[\[Osceola County School Board 6.96 – Gifts to Employees\]](#)

## GRADEBOOKS

Focus Gradebook is provided for all instructional staff. An instructional employee's gradebook is the primary legal documentation for attendance and grades. Grades should be labeled to indicate what they represent. Remember that gradebooks are used for audit purposes. Gradebooks will be incorporated in the instructional employee assessment process; therefore, it is subject to periodic reviews by administrators throughout the school year.

## GRADES

Focus Gradebook is the School District grading system that shall be utilized. Instructional employee grading responsibilities include:

1. Choose a MOG (method of grading) and be able to explain the calculations to parents.
2. Grades should be recorded promptly.
3. Any work which will be recorded in Focus Gradebook shall not be graded or entered by students. This is a violation of confidentiality.
4. Encourage students/parents to monitor grades by using the Focus Student Portal or the Focus Parent Portal.
5. No substitute instructional employees may use Focus Gradebook for grading. However, the school principal may make exceptions for long-term subs.
6. At the end of each quarter, instructional employees will electronically post grades and run the Posted Grades Verification report. Instructional employees need to check with the administration at their school as to whether or not to turn in hard or electronic copies of this report at the end of the quarter.

Beginning the 2019-2020 school year, student report cards are published online only and not printed and placed into the cumulative folders. Parents may access student report cards in their Parent Portal account. Students may access their report cards in their Focus student account access through Classlink. Per a parent's request, the school principal or the school principal's designee shall provide a paper form of the student report card.

In addition, the school principal or the school principal's designee shall send an electronic version (e.g., pdf) of each student's final report card to Records Management which shall be retained within Laserfiche.

If an error is made in recording a grade, the correction must be initialed by the instructional employee making the correction. Grades should be indicative of the achievement shown by the student. There should be periodic check-ups with grades given so that the student is aware of his progress. Grades should always be commensurate with abilities and progress. Students are assessed by a variety of assessment tools (recitations, tests, performance, quizzes, worksheets, participation, observation, rubrics, projects, extra-credit work).

Focus Parent Portal offers greater opportunity for parents to monitor a student's grades. Per the [Osceola County Student Progression Plan](#), each student shall have at least one (1) grade per week that assesses the student's work in a specific area. It is also expected that instructional employees update Focus Gradebook at least weekly to keep student information current.



## GRADING POLICY

All instructional employees are required to follow the Osceola County School Board grading policy as given below:

For Kindergarten and Grade 1, the following grading scale shall apply:

- O = Outstanding/ Exceeds Expectation
- S = Successfully Meeting Standards
- N = Not Demonstrating Consistently
- U = Unsatisfactory/ Needs Attention
- NG = No Grade

For Grades 2 - 5, the following grading scale shall apply:

- A Outstanding progress
- B Above average progress
- C Average progress
- D Below average progress
- F Not passing
- NG No Grade
- I Incomplete

For Grades 6 - 12, the following grading scale shall apply:

- A 90 - 100% Outstanding progress
- B 80 - 89% Above average progress
- C 70 - 79% Average progress
- D 60 - 69% Below average progress
- F 0 - 59% Not passing
- NG No Grade
- I 0%; Incomplete

Students and parents are to be advised of the grading criteria employed in the school and in each class at the beginning of the school year. If an "I" (Incomplete) is recorded on a report card, the requirements for which the "I" was assigned must be satisfied within two (2) weeks of the issuance of report cards or the "I" will be changed to a 59%/ "F."

To receive a report card, a student shall have been enrolled in school at least half of the forty-five (45) day grading period as established by the official school calendar. A grade shall be recorded on the report card for each subject taken.

## **GUIDANCE SERVICES**

The school counselor has unique qualifications and skills to address the academic, personal/social and career developmental needs of all students. Faculty and staff can refer a student to the school counselor when they have a concern for a student whether it is an academic, personal/social or career/college issue. School counselors help students with issues that can interfere with their learning, such as family issues, bullying, stress, anger, suicide, peer problems, trauma/ violence, loss and grief, harassment, or substance abuse. Each school has a referral process that facilitates how students will see the school counselor. The school counselor is a resource for faculty and staff when they need support meeting the academic or behavior needs of particular students. The school counselor works with students, parents, instructional employees, and administrators to support the academic goals and success for all students.

### **English Language Learners (ELLs)**

School counselors are an essential link between these students' home, the school, and the community. From the time that a potential ELL registers, the counselor works with other school personnel to identify properly, place, and provide the student an appropriate program of studies. School counselors work with administrators, and instructional employees to ensure that ELLs have equal access to all school programs. They are trained to be culturally and linguistically sensitive, as they promote the implementation of strategies for using school, community, and home resources to assist ELL students. Through their active role on the ELL Committee, in parent/instructional employee conferences, and in collaboration with instructional employees, school counselors enhance ELL students' emotional well-being, school adjustment, and academic performance.

### **Exceptional Student Education**

The Exceptional Student Education Department provides services to students who have met the eligibility criteria for the following Exceptional Student Education (ESE) programs:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Deaf/Hard of Hearing (DHH)
- Developmentally Delayed (DD)
- Dual Sensory Impaired (DSI)
- Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities (EBD)
- Gifted
- Homebound/Hospitalized (HH)
- Intellectual Disabilities (InD)
- Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Physical Therapy (PT)
- Physically Impaired with Other Health Impairment (OHI)
- Physically Impaired with Orthopedic Impairment (OI)
- Physically Impaired with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)
- Specific Learning Disabled (SLD)
- Speech/Language Impaired (SL)
- Visually Impaired (VI)

- ✓ Exceptional Student Education (ESE) services are usually provided at the student's home-zoned school or the nearest cluster program available.
- ✓ ESE students are provided services in the least restrictive environment and in an inclusive setting with regular education students when appropriate.
- ✓ Each ESE student has an Individual Education Plan (IEP) that is reviewed annually or at the request of the IEP team or parent.
- ✓ Occupational and/or physical therapy are/is provided by licensed occupational and/or physical therapist if an ESE student is found eligible for educationally relevant therapy.
- ✓ Speech/Language therapy is provided by certified speech pathologists when students meet criteria for these services.
- ✓ A full-time audiologist is available to evaluate hearing concerns for all students in the School District.
- ✓ Instructors for students with visual impairments are provided for students meeting criteria for the visually impaired. Braille and orientation/mobility training are included within these areas of expertise.
- ✓ Assistive technology evaluations and services are provided to address assistive technology needs for ESE students.
- ✓ Transportation is provided to ESE students on the regular school bus schedule if appropriate or on special education bus routes. Transportation can either be regular at a regular stop or curb-to-curb service.
- ✓ Compliance Specialists provide services to each school to ensure compliance of the IEP and serve as a liaison for parents of the ESE students at that school.

#### **Section 504**

The Principal shall designate a school-based person as the Section (§) 504 Designee. The §504 Designee facilitates parent and school communication, oversees the written documentation, schedules meetings, and monitors the accommodation plan and subsequent reevaluations. All §504 students who are also eligible for Exceptional Student Education (ESE) will be handled through the Exceptional Student Education Department using IDEA guidelines. Please contact the school administrator or Section (§) 504 Designee for assistance with these services or for more information.

#### **Social Work Services**

Any student attending a public school in the School District of Osceola County is eligible for social work services. To obtain the assistance of a school social worker, Guidance Counselors, Attendance Assistants, School Resource Officers, Resource Compliance Specialists, School Psychologists, Deans, and School Administrators can make a referral.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is an opportunity for children to learn and for families to be involved in their children's education. Homework usually falls into one of three categories: practice, preparation, or extension. Each school shall have homework guidelines. The homework guidelines should address the purpose of homework, the amount and frequency, along with school, instructional employee, and student responsibilities. The roles of parents and others assisting in homework may be addressed.

## **IDENTIFICATION (ID) BADGES**

ID badges are critical to the safety and security of a school campus. All School District employees are expected to wear a school or School District issued ID at all times while at a school worksite or visiting a School District facility. **Employees shall secure their ID badges in the same manner as an assigned key to a School District building or classroom.** All School District employees must sign in at a facility when visiting.

## **INTERCOM ANNOUNCEMENTS (SCHOOLWIDE)**

There shall not be more than one (1) daily intercom schoolwide announcement at a designated time, except in an emergency.

## **INTERNET SAFETY**

To ensure continuity in E-rate compliance and funding for discounted telecommunications services, Internet access, and internal connections, the School District must have a Student Internet Safety Training Plan. This plan requires the participation of all schools. The School District's plan has two major components: required Internet Safety lessons in all English/Language Arts classes and monthly Internet Safety videos shown to all students. For more information, contact the site administrator or the Media & Instructional Technology Department at extension 67200.

- Please see also [Osceola County School Board Rule 8.602 – Internet Safety.](#)

## **JURY DUTY**

School employees, when called for jury duty, shall be considered on temporary duty elsewhere (TDE) and shall receive pay for the time while on jury duty. The On-Site Leave Form must be filled out with a copy of the summons and turned into the school or department secretary. Employees must have official paperwork provided by the Clerk of the Court to receive an excusal for work.

## KEYS

Keys are to be signed out by a designated school member. It is the responsibility of the employee to secure the issued keys and to report any lost or stolen keys to an administrator immediately.

## LESSON PLANS

Instructional employees are responsible for planning and knowing the lessons that they teach. Instructional employees must keep a copy of lessons taught and are required to submit lesson plans to their administrator. Administrators shall also comply with the appropriate collective bargaining agreements that address guidelines for lesson plans.

1. Lesson plans shall meet federal and state requirements for classroom instruction.

- *Section 1003.41 -- State Academic Standards, Florida Statutes*
- *Section 1003.42 – Required Instruction, Florida Statutes*
- *State Board of Education Rule 6A-5.065 -- The Educator Accomplished Practices.*

*(2) The Educator Accomplished Practices.*

*(a) Quality of Instruction.*

*1. Instructional Design and Lesson Planning. Applying concepts from human development and learning theories, the effective educator consistently:*

- a. Aligns instruction with state-adopted standards taking into consideration varying aspects of rigor and complexity;*
- b. Sequences lessons and concepts to ensure coherence and required prior knowledge;*
- c. Designs instruction for students to achieve mastery;*
- d. Selects appropriate formative assessments to monitor learning;*
- e. Uses diagnostic student data to plan lessons;*
- f. Develops learning experiences that require students to demonstrate a variety of applicable skills and competencies; and*
- g. Provides classroom instruction to students in prekindergarten through grade 12 that is age and developmentally appropriate and aligned to the state academic standards as outlined in Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C.*

- Accommodations for:
  - Exceptional Student Education (ESE) students
  - Gifted students
  - Section 504 students
  - English Language Learner (ELL) students
- Differentiated instruction modifications for students in Tier 2 or Tier 3 of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support/ Problem Solving (MTSS/ PS)

*NOTE: A list of appropriate instructional strategies that will be used for a group of ESE, ELL, or MTSS/ PS students shall meet this requirement for lesson plans.*

2. Lesson plans shall address Florida Standards.
  - <http://www.cpalms.org/Public/search/Standard>
3. Florida Course Descriptions shall guide lesson plans.
  - <http://www.cpalms.org/Public/search/course>
4. In general, lesson plans may include, but shall not be limited to:
  - Learning Goals (or Objectives or Essential Questions)
  - Methods or Procedures
  - Resources or Materials Used
  - Assessment or Evaluation
5. A unit plan may fulfill the lesson plan requirement for the defined duration of the unit if the unit plan contains sufficient information that complies with these guiding principles. However, administrators shall not require instructional employees to submit both a unit plan and a lesson plan for the same instructional content.
6. Certain instructional programs or grants may require that lesson plans include additional elements and/ or different timelines for submission in order to meet specific program or grant criteria.
  - The school principal shall receive written approval of the appropriate Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction prior to implementing these requirements.
  - School principals shall share these requirements with instructional employees in advance.
7. In general, instructional employees shall submit lesson plans to the appropriate designated administrator on a weekly basis within one week prior to the actual classroom instruction of the content within the lesson plan.
  - Administrators shall permit instructional employees the flexibility to amend lesson plans when:
    - Data supports that students require differentiated instruction; or
    - Changes to the regular classroom schedule occur that are beyond the instructional employee's control (e.g., schoolwide testing, required professional development, school activities, fire, or tornado drills, etc.).

## **MAILBOXES AND MAIL RETRIEVAL**

Mailboxes are available to all staff members. Due to confidentiality, only employees of the School District of Osceola County should be allowed access to this area.

## **MAINTENANCE OF BUILDING AND CLASSROOMS**

Maintenance of classrooms and school buildings is crucial to proper operation of a school and is necessary for the safety and well-being of students and employees. The employee should report to an administrator any noted damage or repairs needed for classrooms and other student areas.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Mission of the School District of Osceola County Florida is:

- “Inspiring all learners to reach their highest potential as responsible, productive citizens.”

## **MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT (MTSS)**

Multi-Tiered System of Support/ Problem-Solving, also called MTSS, is a multi-tiered model for providing a strong core curriculum to all students and evidence-based interventions to students who are struggling with academic and/or behavior problems.

The focus of MTSS is to use data-based decision making to provide quality instruction and early intervention to improve outcomes for all students. For further information, contact the school administrator or the Curriculum & Instruction Department.

## **NETWORK ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

All employees are required to follow the School District's [Network Acceptable Use Policy](#). Any violation of these policies can result in the suspension of access privileges or other disciplinary action, including employee dismissal. All non-school related email and Internet activities should only take place when the staff member is not on duty; this would be during planning, breaks, lunch, or before or after duty hours.

Users of the network system of the School District of Osceola County are responsible for their activity on the network.

[\[Osceola County School Board Rule 8.60 – Network Acceptable Use\]](#)



## NEPOTISM

[Osceola County School Board Rule 6.12 – Nepotism](#) requires that the School Board shall not employ two (2) or more close relatives or family members where one (1) individual is the immediate supervisor of another relative or family member. Such close relatives or family members are defined as: father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half-brother, or half-sister.

## PARENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

- [Chapter 1014 – Parents' Bill of Rights, Florida Statutes](#), provides that:
  - It is the fundamental right of parents to direct the upbringing, education, and care of the parent's minor children.
  - The state, its political subdivisions, any other governmental entity, or other institution may not infringe upon the fundamental rights of a parent to direct the upbringing, education, health care, and mental health of a parent's minor child.
  - The School District shall not withhold from the minor child's parent any important information relating to the minor child's health, well-being, and education.
  - Florida's parents' rights include, but are not limited to, the right to:
    - direct the education, care, and moral or religious training of the parent's minor child;
    - apply to enroll the parent's minor child in the school of the parent's choice;
    - access and review all education and/ or medical records relating to the parent's minor child, unless otherwise prohibited by law;
    - make health care decisions for the parent's minor child, unless otherwise prohibited by law;
    - exempt the parent's minor child from immunizations;
    - consent in writing before any record of the parent's minor child's biometric scan, blood, or genetic information is made, shared, or stored, except as required by general law or court order.
    - consent in writing before any video or voice recording of the parent's minor child is made, shared, or stored, except as required and/ or permitted by law, such as:
      - ✓ authorized academic or extracurricular activities;
      - ✓ regular classroom instructions;
      - ✓ safety, security, or surveillance of buildings or grounds and student transportation vehicles; or

- ✓ a photo identification card.
  - be notified promptly if an employee suspects that a criminal offense has been committed against the parent's minor child, unless otherwise prohibited by law;
  - inspect instructional materials and object to such materials on the basis of morality, sex, religion, or the belief that the materials are harmful;
  - provide a written objection to and withdraw the parent's minor child from participation in any portion of the School District's comprehensive health education that relates to sex education, acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) education, or any instruction regarding sexuality;
  - enroll the parent's eligible minor child in gifted or special education programs; and
  - opt out of any School District-level data collection relating to the parent's minor child not required by law.
- Recent revisions to [State Board of Education Rule 6A-10.081 – Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida](#) include:
    - *Obligation to the student requires that the individual:*
      - Shall not intentionally provide classroom instruction to students in:
        - ✓ **Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 8 on sexual orientation or gender identity, except when required by Sections 1003.42(2)(n)3. and 1003.46, F.S.; and in**
        - ✓ **Grades 9 through 12 on sexual orientation or gender identity unless such instruction is either expressly required by state academic standards as adopted in Rule 6A-1.09401, F.A.C., or is part of a reproductive health course or health lesson for which a student's parent has the option to have his or her student not attend; and**
      - Shall not discourage or prohibit parental notification of and involvement in critical decisions affecting a student's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being unless the individual reasonably believes that disclosure would result in abuse, abandonment, or neglect as defined in Section 39.01, F.S.; and
      - Shall not harass or discriminate against any student on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, handicapping condition, sexual orientation, or social and family background and shall make reasonable effort to assure that each student is protected from harassment or discrimination. Discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex includes subjecting any student to training or instruction that espouses, promotes, advances, inculcates, or compels such student to believe any of the concepts listed in Section 1000.05(4)(a), Florida Statutes [which states]:

*It shall constitute discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex under this section to subject any student or employee to training or instruction that espouses, promotes, advances, inculcates, or compels such student or employee to believe any of the following concepts:*

- 1. Members of one race, color, national origin, or sex are morally superior to members of another race, color, national origin, or sex.*
  - 2. A person, by virtue of his or her race, color, national origin, or sex, is inherently racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously.*
  - 3. A person's moral character or status as either privileged or oppressed is necessarily determined by his or her race, color, national origin, or sex.*
  - 4. Members of one race, color, national origin, or sex cannot and should not attempt to treat others without respect to race, color, national origin, or sex.*
  - 5. A person, by virtue of his or her race, color, national origin, or sex, bears responsibility for, or should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment because of, actions committed in the past by other members of the same race, color, national origin, or sex.*
  - 6. A person, by virtue of his or her race, color, national origin, or sex, should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment to achieve diversity, equity, or inclusion.*
  - 7. A person, by virtue of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, bears personal responsibility for and must feel guilt, anguish, or other forms of psychological distress because of actions, in which the person played no part, committed in the past by other members of the same race, color, national origin, or sex.*
  - 8. Such virtues as merit, excellence, hard work, fairness, neutrality, objectivity, and racial colorblindness are racist or sexist, or were created by members of a particular race, color, national origin, or sex to oppress members of another race, color, national origin, or sex.*
- *Shall not violate Section 553.865(9)(b), F.S., which relates to entering restrooms and changing facilities designated for the opposite sex on the premises of an educational institution.*
  - *Shall not violate Section 1000.071, F.S., which relates to the use of personal titles and pronouns in educational institutions.*
  - *The school principal shall not prevent, direct school personnel to prevent, or allow school personnel to prevent students from accessing any material used in a classroom, made available in a school or classroom library, or included on a reading list unless:*
    - *the school principal or his or her designee has reviewed the material and determines it violates the prohibitions in Section 1006.28(2)(a)2., F.S.;*

- *the material is unavailable to students based upon school board policies adopted to implement Section 1006.28(2)(d), F.S.; or*
  - *it was determined under the School District's objection process adopted to implement Section 1006.28(2)(a)2., F.S., that the material violated one of the prohibitions in that section.*
- If a Florida school district or its employees do not comply with these state laws, a parent may:
  - bring legal action against the School District to obtain declaratory judgment; and
  - receive monetary awards of injunctive relief, damages, reasonable attorney fees, and court costs.
- Alleged violations of this policy shall be reported to the employee's site administrator/ supervisor for review and determination of an investigation.
- Depending upon the circumstances of the allegations, the investigation may be handled at the worksite by the administrator/ supervisor, or the matter may be assigned to School District investigation through the Department of Human Resources.
- **Violations of this policy may result in employee discipline up to and including termination. In addition, certified educators may receive sanctions against the educator's state-issued certificate.**

## PASSWORDS

School District employees' and students' passwords are confidential, and shall meet the following requirements in order to maintain network security:

- A. Employees/students shall change passwords when prompted by the School District's network or by School District-approved software program applications, or whenever the employee/ student feels his or her password may have been compromised;
- B. Employee/student passwords shall follow the standards established and approved by the Chief Information officer, or designee;
- C. Employees/students shall type in passwords at each log in.
- D. Employees/students shall not share passwords and shall not set passwords to an automatic log in mode.
- E. It may become necessary to know employee or student passwords for maintenance purposes. Only authorized computer maintenance personnel will be allowed to know passwords. Upon completion of the maintenance activity, the user will need to change his or her password.

Computers should be locked at any time that the User is not present at the machine. This can be done quickly by pressing the Windows Key and the "L" key simultaneously. The User can then log back in when they return using the "Ctrl - Alt - Delete" method. This allows the user to lock their machine without closing programs in use.

Example:  + "L"

The employee's User ID and Password should never be the same. This is the first thing hackers will guess.

## PAYROLL INFORMATION

The [SDOC Payroll Department](#) webpage on the SDOC public website is your source for information on:

- ✓ Payroll Calendars
- ✓ Payroll Reference Tools
  - *How to Read Your Paystub*
  - *Deductions Processed through Payroll*
- ✓ Forms
- ✓ Kronos Information
- ✓ Miscellaneous Information

SDOC employees may access the [SDOC Payroll Department](#) webpage at:

- <https://www.osceolaschools.net/Page/1473>

Beginning July 01, 2023, [Section 447.303 – Dues; deduction and collection, Florida Statutes](#), states:

*... [A]n employee organization that has been certified as a bargaining agent may not have its dues and uniform assessments deducted and collected by the employer from the salaries of those employees in the unit. A public employee may pay dues and uniform assessments directly to the employee organization that has been certified as the bargaining agent.*

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

- The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag shall be recited at the beginning of each school day in elementary, middle, and high schools. Students may not be required to recite or participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.
- The Code of Student Conduct that is distributed to all students shall contain written notification that the student has the right not to participate in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.
- The United States flag and the official flag of Florida shall be displayed daily on a suitable flag staff on the grounds of each school and School Board facility when the weather permits. Flags shall be displayed according to established guidelines.
- Each classroom and auditorium shall display the United States flag.
- All flags shall meet the requirements of Florida Statutes.

### [Osceola County School Board Rule 3.60 – Flag Display and Pledge]

## POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF EMPLOYEES

- It is the responsibility of every School District employee to read, understand, and comply with our School District's policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, the document [SDOC Employees, Political Activities, and the Law](#).
- As individuals, all SDOC employees may exercise all rights and obligations of citizenship provided in the Florida Constitution and state laws and the United States Constitution and federal laws.
- Florida's *Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida* state that each public education employee has an "[o]bligation to the public" and "requires that the individual:
  1. Shall take reasonable precautions to distinguish between personal views and those of any educational institution or organization with which the individual is affiliated.
  2. Shall not intentionally distort or misrepresent facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
  3. Shall not use institutional privileges for personal gain or advantage.
  4. Shall accept no gratuity, gift, or favor that might influence professional judgment.
  5. Shall offer no gratuity, gift, or favor to obtain special advantages."
- **During off-duty, non-work hours only**, all School District employees may:
  - Vote.
  - Be a poll worker.
  - Run for public office in partisan or nonpartisan elections.
  - Campaign for and hold office in political clubs and organizations.
  - Actively campaign for candidates for public office in partisan and nonpartisan elections.
  - Contribute money to political organizations.
  - Attend political fundraising functions.



- All School District employees shall **not**:
  - Hold, or be a candidate for, public office while on duty or during work hours.
  - Take any active part in a political campaign while on duty or during work hours.
  - Use official authority or influence to interfere with or affect the results of an election or nomination.
  - Directly or indirectly coerce contributions from subordinates in support of a political party or candidate.
  - Involve students in national, state, or local political activities during the instructional day.
  - Use school buildings, grounds, or equipment for personal political activities.
  - Use the data network for political advertisements or political activities.
  - Post personal views on social, political, religious, or other non-business-related matters on the School District network.
- Alleged violations of this policy shall be reported to the employee's site administrator/ supervisor for review and determination of an investigation.
- Depending upon the circumstances of the allegations, the investigation may be handled at the worksite by the administrator/ supervisor, or the matter may be assigned to School District investigation through the Department of Human Resources.
- **Violations of this policy may result in employee discipline up to and including termination. In addition, certified educators may receive sanctions against the educator's state-issued certificate.**

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR SUPPORTS**

Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) "is the application of evidence-based strategies and systems to assist schools to increase academic performance, increase safety, decrease problem behaviors, and establish positive school cultures."

In Osceola County, school-wide implementation of PBS focuses on a team-based approach to establishing positive, proactive, and educational strategies to address problem student behaviors. PBS schools utilize discipline data to assess the occurrence of behaviors across campus to identify problem areas, brainstorm interventions that include teaching skills to students, creating motivating ways to provide feedback to students for demonstrating those skills and communicating the results of the interventions to staff on a regular basis.

The School District of Osceola County has developed a partnership with the University of South Florida to provide ongoing training and technical assistance to the School District PBS schools to support their efforts at the implementation of PBS at all three levels. At the school-wide level, the University trains school teams, and a school-wide plan is developed to support the needs of all students. At the targeted group level, USF provides additional training to address targeted interventions such as bully prevention and anger management to address the specific needs of students who may need extra support. At the individual level of the PBS process, individualized strategies are developed.

## PROGRESS REPORTS

It is required that Progress Reports be completed and communicated to parents at mid-term if a student is performing below average (e.g., “C”) work, but this is a minimum. Students may not be failed unless a progress report is on file, or the failing grades occur during the last week of the grading period. Phone calls are also encouraged.

Progress reports are published online only and not printed. Parents may access progress reports in their Parent Portal account. Students may access their progress reports in their Focus student account access through Classlink. Per a parent’s request, the school principal or the school principal’s designee shall provide a paper form of the progress report.

## PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

Should it become necessary to discipline an employee, it is the School District’s intent to do so consistent with the concept of progressive discipline except in those instances where infractions are of such a serious nature and do not warrant progressive discipline. The determination to forego progressive discipline shall be made by the Superintendent.

[\[Instructional Employees’ Contract Article IX, 9.07-1\]](#)

## REASONABLE FORCE

[Sections 1006.11 – Standards for use of reasonable force](#) and [1003.32 – Authority of teacher; responsibility for control of students; district school board and principal duties, Florida Statutes](#), authorize instructional employees and other school personnel to use reasonable force to protect the employee and/ or others from injury. The Department of Education has defined reasonable force as, “appropriate professional conduct including physical force as necessary to maintain a safe and orderly environment.”

The Florida Department of Education has also clarified that school personnel do have the right and authority to protect against:

- Conditions harmful to learning
- Conditions harmful to student’s physical and mental health
- Conditions harmful to safety
- Conditions of harm and/ or safety of self, school personnel, and others

Furthermore, [Section 1006.11 – Standards for use of reasonable force](#), provides that a principal, instructional employee, other staff member, or bus driver shall not be civilly or criminally liable for any action carried out in conformity with Osceola County School Board Rules regarding the control, discipline, suspension, and expulsion of students, except in the case of excessive force or cruel and unusual punishment. In addition, [Section 1003.32 \(1\)\(i\), Florida Statutes](#), empowers instructional employees and other school personnel to press charges against a student if a crime has been

committed against an instructional employee or other instructional personnel on school property, on school sponsored transportation, or during school sponsored activities.

[[The School District of Osceola County Code of Student Conduct](#) and referenced [Florida Statutes](#)]

## **REASONABLE SUSPICION**

School officials may conduct a warrantless search of a student's person, book bag, locker, electronic device, motor vehicle, or any other storage area on School Board property, if such official(s) have a reasonable suspicion that illegal, prohibited, stolen, obscene, inappropriate, or harmful items or substances exist. An administrator or designee should be present when a search is conducted.

[[The School District of Osceola County Code of Student Conduct](#)]

## REPORT CARDS

See refer to the *Appendix for Progress Reports and Report Card Dates*.

The Report Card is a legal document and reflects the cumulative progress of the student during a given school year. To receive a report card grade, a student shall have been enrolled in school at least  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the 45-day grading period as established by the official school calendar. If an elementary student is enrolled for fewer days, a report card will be issued but a grade is not required.

Instructional employees should look for trends in the student's performance in addition to averaging numerical scores to determine a grade. The grade should reflect the pattern of performance. Failure or success on one test or assigned task should not be the basis for assigning grades. Grades shall reflect the learning that has occurred after the student has had sufficient opportunity to practice. It is not necessary to grade the performance of the student on every task.

## RETENTION OF RECORDS

The School District has established and maintains a system for the identification, inventory, retention, storage and disposal or preservation of School District records pursuant to the Public Records Law and in accordance with the guidelines, including records retention schedules, set forth by the Florida Department of State, Division of Library and Information Services, and per recommendations as set forth by the School Board, Superintendent and staff. Procedures regarding the management of School District records shall be approved by the School Board and contained in the Records Management Manual.

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY TRAINING REQUIREMENT**

In addition to our SDOC Employee Orientation annual requirement, Florida law requires all SDOC employees to complete annual safety and security trainings each school year [e.g., Section 1006.07 – District school board duties relating to student discipline and school safety, Florida Statutes; State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.0018 – School Safety Requirements and Monitoring, Florida Administrative Code (FAC); and State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.0019 – Threat Management, Florida Administrative Code (FAC)], but not limited to:

- **Active Assailant**
- **Family Reunification**
- **Recognition of Concerning Behaviors or Threats**
- **Reporting of Threats**

Depending upon the SDOC employee's assigned position and/ or role, the employee may also be required to complete **additional specific safety trainings**, including, but not limited to:

- **Threat Management**

Per Section 1003.42 – Required Instruction, Florida Statutes, and State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.0019 – Threat Management Florida Administrative Code (FAC), instructional employees shall imbed student safety training within the required lessons that address life skills/ resiliency each quarter.

SDOC employees may access the required trainings at:

- <https://osceolaschools-fl.safeschools.com/training/home>

## **SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

The School Advisory Council (SAC) is a team comprised of parents, instructional employees, students, principal, support staff, business, and interested community members that meet monthly during the academic year. The purpose of the SAC is to assist the principal in developing and evaluating the school improvement plan, monitoring its implementation, student progression, and annual school budget.

It is the responsibility of the School Advisory Council to help increase student achievement. The SAC conducts a needs assessment that identifies internal and external factors that affect student learning. After data analysis, the SAC assists in clarifying the vision for the school and establishing indicators for student success. Through dedicated funding, the Council assists the school in reaching its improvement goals. The SAC is responsible to communicate the school improvement plan to parents, educators, and the community.

## **SCHOOL BOARD RULES**

The [Osceola County School Board Rules](#) are the policies that govern the School District, its employees, parents, and students. It is the responsibility of every School District employee to read, understand, and comply with the policies contained in the [Osceola County School Board Rules](#) that apply to their work assignments. The most current copy of the [Osceola County School Board Rules](#) may be accessed and downloaded as an electronic file from our School District website.

## **SDOC GUEST NETWORK [formerly known as Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)]**

All employees and guest users are required to follow *Osceola County School Board Rule 8.60 – Network Acceptable Use*. All users of the network system of the School District of Osceola County are responsible for their activity on the network.

[\[Osceola County School Board Rule 8.60 – Network Acceptable Use\]](#)

## **SEXUAL HARRASSMENT**

The School Board desires to maintain an academic and work environment in which all employees, volunteers, and students are treated with respect and dignity. A vital element of this atmosphere is the Board's commitment to equal opportunities and the prohibition of discriminatory practices. The Board's prohibition against discriminatory practices includes sexual harassment, or any other form of harassment based upon a person's membership in a protected class and specifically prohibited by applicable state or federal law. The School Board forbids and will not tolerate sexual harassment, or any other form of illegal harassment, of any employee, student, volunteer, or visitor.

[\[Osceola County School Board Rule 2.70 – Prohibiting Discrimination, Including Sexual and Other Forms of Harassment\]](#)

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

Employees must maintain appropriate relationships with students and parents at all times. Employees are responsible for the content of their communication. Employees must be fair and respectful and maintain professionalism consistent with School District policies and state law. Employees shall not engage in any activity that could reasonably be viewed as inappropriate.

### [Osceola County School Board Rule 8.601 – Social Media]

- Employees should read [Osceola County School Board Rule 8.601 – Social Media](#) and the [School District Guidelines for the Use of Social Networking Websites and/ or Blogs](#) and ask their administrator/ supervisor if they still have questions.
- [Section 1003.02 – District school board operation and control of public K-12 education within the school district, Florida Statutes](#), prohibits the use of TikTok or any successor application or service on School District-owned devices or as a platform to communicate or promote any School District, school, school-sponsored club, extracurricular organization, or athletic team.

## **SOFTWARE AND WEB TOOLS**

The School District's Software and Web Tools Evaluation Committee meets monthly to review requests to purchase software or web-based programs or permission to use free software or web-based programs. The committee members review the impact on the network, privacy of the data collected, adequacy of computer systems and technical support required. The forms and meeting dates can be found on the Media & Instructional Technology Department's web site.

## **STUDENT REMOVAL**

### Teacher Removal of Students from Classroom

- I. Appropriate action will be taken to remove or to make special provisions for a disruptive student. Disruptive behavior will include assault on staff or students, threat(s) or violence, disrespect, willful disregard of an instructional employee's directions, malicious vandalism, possession of weapons of any type, continuing use of profane language or obscene gestures, and instigation of violence or mass disobedience to legitimate directions. When an instructional employee sends a disruptive student to the office, the principal or his or her representative will provide oral and/or written feedback to the instructional employee with regard to present and/or future action concerning the student's behavior. The instructional employee may request a conference with the principal or his/her representative and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) prior to the student's return to his/her classroom. A disruptive student will not normally be returned to the classroom where he/she exhibited disruptive behavior until the instructional employee has received the feedback.
- II. An instructional employee may remove from class a student whose behavior interferes with the instructional employee's ability to communicate effectively with other students in the class or with the ability of the student's classmates to learn.



- III. The principal may not return a student who has been removed by an instructional employee from the instructional employee's class without the instructional employee's consent, unless the Placement Review Committee established herein determines that such placement is the best or only available alternative. The instructional employee and Placement Review Committee must render decisions within five (5) working days of the removal of the student from the classroom.
- IV. Each school shall establish a Placement Review Committee(s) to determine whether a student is to be returned to an instructional employee's class after that student has been removed by the instructional employee, and the instructional employee has withheld consent for that student to be returned to the instructional employee's class.
  - A. Committee membership shall include the following:
    - 1. Two (2) instructional employees selected by the instructional staff of the school which shall include:
      - a. One (1) instructional employee selected by the school's faculty and
      - b. One (1) instructional employee selected by the instructional employee who has removed the student;
    - 2. One (1) member of the school staff selected by the principal;
    - 3. One (1) instructional employee selected by the instructional staff of the school to serve as an alternate member of the committee.
  - B. An instructional employee who removed a student from his/her class and who has withheld consent for the return of that student to his/her class shall not serve on the committee when the committee makes its decision regarding the return of the student.
  - C. The Placement Review Committee(s) will be selected during pre-planning. Each school's faculty shall also determine the following during pre-planning:
    - 1. Whether a current school committee(s) meets the criteria contained herein for the Placement Review Committee(s) and whether the faculty wishes that committee to perform the duties of the Placement Review Committee(s);
    - 2. The number of Placement Review Committees needed at each school;
    - 3. The terms of office of the members of the Placement Review Committee(s);
    - 4. The method the instructional staff shall use in the selection of the Placement Review Committee(s) members;
    - 5. The appropriate form an instructional employee uses to document the behavior which resulted in the student's removal from the classroom; and
    - 6. Any instructional employee who removes twenty-five percent (25%) of instructional employee's total class enrollment shall be required to complete professional development to improve classroom management skills. Any required training under this provision shall be free of cost to the instructional employee.

[\[Osceola County School Board Rule 5.33 – Teacher Removal of Students from Classroom\]](#)

## **SUBSTITUTE LESSON PLANS**

Instructional employees shall follow the procedures set forth for the automated substitute calling system. Whenever practicable the instructional employee will ensure that lesson plans for student activities are available for the substitute for that particular day or number of days. Items such as class rolls, seating charts, and registers of attendance should be available where applicable.

[\[Instructional Employees' Contract Article V, 5.18\]](#)

## **SUPERVISION**

The School Board directs that a sign containing the following language be placed at each educational facility:

"The school has formal supervisory responsibility for a student during the time the student is being transported to or from the school at public expense; during the time the student is attending school; during the time the student is on the school premises, participating with authorization in a school sponsored activity; and, during a reasonable time before and after a student is on the school premises for attendance at a school or authorized participation in a school sponsored activity, and only when on the premises. A reasonable time means thirty minutes before or after the activity is scheduled or actually begins or ends, whichever is longer. Casual or incidental contact between School District personnel and students on school property does not result in a legal duty to supervise. The school's duty of supervision does not extend to anyone other than students attending school and students authorized to participate in school sponsored activities."

[\[Osceola County School Board Rule 3.401 – Safety on School Grounds\]](#)

Every member of the staff is responsible for the safety of pupils while on the school grounds. The principal shall eliminate all hazards on school grounds insofar as possible. Instructional employees shall be assigned to supervise pupils on the school grounds before and after classroom instruction. Principals shall see that all activities are properly supervised, and that instructional employees and students take all necessary precautions. Insofar as practical, there shall be an instructional employee or properly instructed aide responsible for supervising pupils as they board and unload from buses at the school site. The person shall be on alert for any safety hazard, and shall attempt to maintain orderly procedures on the part of the pupils.

## TEACHERS' BILL OF RIGHTS

- [Chapter 1015 – Teachers' Bill of Rights](#) establishes “a clear set of rights for [Florida’s public school] teachers regarding their profession and classrooms” in four (4) areas:

### 1. Rights of employment include that the teacher:

- shall have a right to work whether or not the teacher is a member of any labor union;
- may not be held civilly or criminally liable for actions carried out in conformity with State Board of Education rules, except in cases of excessive force or cruel and unusual punishment;
- may have access to liability coverage through the State of Florida’s educator liability insurance program;
- may receive a reimbursement of reasonable expenses for legal services from the School District if the teacher is charged with civil or criminal actions arising out of and in the course of the performance of assigned duties and responsibilities;
- shall have the right to be free from discrimination in public K- 20 educational institutions; and
- shall be provided multiple pathways to earn a Florida educator certificate.

### 2. Right to continuing education includes that the teacher:

- shall have a guaranteed coordinated system of professional development with the goals of increasing student achievement, enhancing classroom instruction, and preparing students for continuing their education or joining the workforce; and
- may receive a waiver for tuition and fees for up to six (6) credit hours per term at a state university or Florida College System institution.

### 3. Right to control the classroom includes that the teacher, in accordance with state and federal law and the Osceola County School Board’s [Code of Student Conduct](#) and [Matrix of Infractions and Possible Consequences](#):

- has the authority to control and discipline students in the teacher’s classroom and in other places in which the teacher is assigned to be in charge of students;
- may establish classroom rules of conduct;
- may establish and implement consequences, which are designed to change behavior, for infractions of classroom rules of conduct;
- may have disobedient, disrespectful, violent, abusive, uncontrollable, or disruptive students removed from the classroom for behavior management intervention;

- have violent, abusive, uncontrollable, or disruptive students directed to appropriate school or School District personnel for information and assistance;
- assist in enforcing school rules on school property, during school-sponsored transportation, and during school-sponsored activities;
- request and receive information relating to the disposition of any referrals to administration for a violation of classroom rules of conduct or school rules;
- request and receive immediate assistance in classroom management if a student becomes uncontrollable or in the case of an emergency;
- request and receive training and other assistance to improve the teacher's skills in classroom management, violence prevention, conflict resolution, and related areas;
- press charges if there is a reason to believe that a crime has been committed on school property, during school-sponsored transportation, or during school-sponsored activities;
- use reasonable force, according to standards adopted by the State Board of Education, to protect the teacher's self or others from injury; and
- has a rebuttable presumption that the teacher was taking necessary action to restore or maintain the safety or educational atmosphere of the teacher's classroom in cases in which a teacher faces litigation or professional practices sanctions for an action so taken.

**4. Right to direct classroom instruction** includes that the teacher:

- has the right to direct the teacher's classroom instruction in accordance with state and federal law and Osceola County School Board Rules;
  - may either request that the Commissioner of Education appoint a special magistrate to review the dispute or bring an action against the School District to obtain declaratory or injunctive relief if a School District or school administrator directs the teacher to take some action contrary to state law; and
  - has the right to receive student assessment data in a timely manner in order to assist in instruction.
- Further, pursuant to [Section 1003.32 – Authority of teacher; responsibility for control of students; district school board and principal duties, Florida Statutes](#),
    - When a student is sent by a teacher to the school principal's office for behavioral concerns, the school principal shall determine whether the student violated the Osceola County School Board's [Code of Student Conduct](#) and shall apply student discipline in accordance with the Osceola County School Board's [Code of Student Conduct](#) and [Matrix of Infractions and Possible Consequences](#).

- The school principal must inform the referring teacher of any disciplinary action taken, or lack thereof, if the situation so warrants.
- If the school principal deviates from the teacher's recommended course of action, then the school principal must inform the teacher in writing of the basis for such a deviation from the teacher's recommendation.
- Alleged violations of this policy shall be reported to the employee's site administrator/ supervisor for review and determination of an investigation.
- Depending upon the circumstances of the allegations, the investigation may be handled at the worksite by the administrator/ supervisor, or the matter may be assigned to School District investigation through the Department of Human Resources.
- **Violations of this policy may result in employee discipline up to and including termination. In addition, certified educators may receive sanctions against the educator's state-issued certificate.**

## TECHNOLOGY

Employees are responsible for the appropriate use of School District computers and communications resources and for taking reasonable precautions to secure the information and equipment entrusted to them. Employees are responsible for reporting inappropriate use of School District computers and breaches of computer security. Employees are responsible for adhering to policies and practices to ensure that computer and communication resources are used acceptably and that practical measures are taken to prevent loss or damage of computer information and equipment.

The School District has a number of resources available to guide employees in the appropriate use of School District computers and communications resources including but not limited to: [Employee Technology Awareness and Security Handbook](#); Employee Technology Awareness & Security training (TAST); [Osceola County School Board Rule 8.60 – Network Acceptable Use](#); [Osceola County School Board Rule 8.601 – Social Media](#); and [Osceola County School Board Rule 6.321 – Employee Use of Cellular Telephones](#).

- Per [Section 1003.02 – District school board operation and control of public K-12 education within the school district, Florida Statutes](#), students may not access social media platforms through the use of Internet access provided by the School District, except when expressly directed by a teacher solely for educational purposes.
- Per [Section 1006.07 – District school board duties relating to student discipline and school safety, Florida Statutes](#), students may not use wireless communications devices during instructional time except when expressly directed by a teacher solely for educational purposes.
- Per [Section 1003.32 – Authority of teacher; responsibility for control of students; district school board and principal duties, Florida Statutes](#), teachers may establish classroom rules of conduct to include designating an area for wireless communications devices to be stored during instructional time.

## Technology Awareness and Security Training (TAST) Resources

### Osceola County School District Procedures

- [Employee Technology Awareness and Security Handbook](#)
- [Guidelines for the Use of Social Networking Websites and/ or Blogs](#)
- [Student Internet and Network Use Procedures](#)
- [Student Internet Safety Plan](#)
- [Student Internet Safety Procedures](#)
- [Student Internet Safety Procedures PowerPoint](#)

### Osceola County School Board Rules

- [3.50 – Public Information and Inspection of Records](#)
- [3.52 – Copyrighted Materials](#)
- [5.70 – Student Records](#)
- [6.27 – Professional Ethics](#)
- [6.29 – Reporting of Misconduct](#)
- [6.30 – Violation of Local, State, or Federal Laws](#)

- [6.31 – Records and Reports](#)
- [6.321 – Employee Use of Cellular Telephones](#)
- [8.60 – Network Acceptable Use](#)
- [8.601 – Social Media](#)
- [8.602 – Internet Safety](#)
- [8.603 – Artificial Intelligence Acceptable Use](#)
- [8.64 Operation of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles \(Drones\)](#)

#### **State Board of Education Rules**

- [6A-1.0955 – Education Records](#)
- [6A-10.081 – Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida](#)

#### **Florida Statutes**

- [Chapter 119 - Public Records](#)
- [Section 1001.42 – Powers and duties of district school board](#)
- [Section 1003.02 – District school board operation and control of public K-12 education within the school district](#)
- [Section 1003.32 – Authority of teacher; responsibility for control of students; district school board and principal duties](#)
- [Section 1003.41 – State Academic Standards](#)
- [Section 1003.42 – Required Instruction](#)
- [Section 1006.07 – District school board duties relating to student discipline and school safety](#)
- [Section 1012.01 – Definitions](#)

### **TELEPHONE TREE**

A phone tree is an essential tool in communicating with faculty and staff in the event of an emergency. It is the employee's responsibility to make sure the phone number on the tree is correct and to update the school or department secretary when a phone number changes.

### **TEST SECURITY**

[Florida State Board of Education Rule 6A-10.042, Florida Administrative Code \(FAC\)](#), was developed to meet the requirements of the Test Security Statutes [[Section 1008.22 – Student assessment program for public schools](#); [Section 1008.23 – Confidentiality of assessment instruments](#); and [Section 1008.24 – Test administration and security; public records exemption](#), Florida Statutes], and applies to anyone involved in the administration of a statewide assessment or any assessment to be used for employee evaluation purposes.

Florida law prohibits activities that may threaten the integrity of the test including, but not limited to, the following examples:

- Reading or viewing the passages or test items;
- Revealing the passages or test items;
- Copying the passages or test items;



- Explaining or reading passages or test items for students;
- Changing or otherwise interfering with student responses to test items;
- Copying or reading student responses; and/ or
- Causing achievement of schools to be inaccurately measured or reported.

Some allowable accommodations for English Language Learners (ELLs), recently exited ELLs, or students with current Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans require test administrators to view test content or transcribe student responses. Test administrators are permitted to provide the accommodation(s) following the instructions provided by the Florida Department of Education.

**All School District employees are prohibited from examining or copying the test items and/ or the contents of the test.**

**The security of all test content must be maintained before, during, and after each test administration.**

**Inappropriate actions by any School District employee shall result in further investigation, possible loss of teaching certification, and possible involvement of law enforcement agencies.**

Assigned School District or school employees shall:

- ✓ receive appropriate training regarding the administration of any assessment to be used for employee evaluation purposes; and
- ✓ read the information and instructions provided in all applicable sections of the relevant test administration manual and/ or directions, Florida Statutes, State Board of Education Rules, Osceola County School Board Rules, and School District procedures.

School District or school employees shall follow all test administration and security procedures, applicable to my role, outlined in the relevant test administration manual and/ or directions, Florida Statutes, State Board of Education Rules, Osceola County School Board Rules, and School District procedures.

School District or school employees shall not reveal or disclose any information about the test items or engage in any acts that would violate the security of statewide assessments or cause student achievement to be inaccurately represented.

## **TEXTBOOKS/ INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS**

Instructional employees are required to keep accurate records of textbooks and report any lost or stolen books to the bookkeeper or designee. Each instructional employee is charged with the responsibility for proper accounting of textbooks/ instructional materials for the instructional employee's assigned course(s). Either students shall sign a textbook/ instructional materials assignment sheet for each item issued, or the instructional employee shall enter the required data in the School District's approved software. This data shall indicate the name of the textbook/ item, the textbook/ item number, and the condition of the textbook/ item at the time it is issued. The student is then responsible for the textbook/ item until it is returned and will be assessed for lost or excessively damaged textbooks/ instructional materials. The instructional employee shall not allow a student to take a textbook/ item from the classroom without properly checking it out to the student.

## **TOBACCO-FREE AND SMOKING-FREE ENVIRONMENT**

All uses of tobacco products in any form are prohibited in any School District-owned facility or property, vehicle, or at School District-sponsored or regulated events.

[\[Osceola County School Board Rule 2.90 – Tobacco-Free and Smoking-Free Environment\]](#)

## **VISITORS ON CAMPUS**

- Any person entering the premises of a school shall report to the principal or designee and make known the purpose of the visit.
- This policy does not apply to routine deliveries or scheduled maintenance visits.
- A student not enrolled in the school or a student not accompanied by a parent or guardian is prohibited from visiting a school unless otherwise approved by the principal.
- Parents or guardians are invited to visit the schools. To avoid interrupting the daily program, the parent should request a conference for after school hours or during an instructional employee's planning period. Parents or guardians are encouraged to plan such conferences with instructional employees and shall sign in at the principal's office and be issued a visitor's badge at the time they arrive on the campus.
- Any person who enters or remains upon School District property without legitimate purpose may be found to be trespassing and, therefore, in violation of Florida Statutes and subject to arrest and penalties as defined by statutes.

[\[Osceola County School Board Rule 9.60 -- Visitors\]](#)

## **VOLUNTEERS**

- Volunteer Registration – All OASIS school volunteers must register online at <https://volunteer.osceola.k12.fl.us>. There are no exceptions.
- Volunteer Screening – The Osceola Sheriff's Office will run a local background check on all volunteer applicants. If no local arrests disqualify a potential volunteer, OASIS will run a nationwide background check through ChoicePoint Volunteer Select Plus. Always allow three weeks for volunteer clearance.
- Volunteer Orientation – All volunteers must attend a mandatory one-time School District volunteer policy and procedure orientation prior to the first volunteer activity.
- School-Based Volunteer Coordinators – Each school has a principal-appointed volunteer coordinator who is familiar with all School District policies and procedures. The volunteer coordinator can answer questions and identify which volunteers are approved.

## **WITHDRAWALS**

Students may be administratively withdrawn under the following circumstances:

- Parent or legal guardian comes into school to inform the school of intention to withdraw and completes withdrawal paperwork.
- Student is missing from school, and despite all reasonable efforts of school staff and Student Services staff, the student cannot be located.
- School has received a request for records from another school district.
- The school or Student Services receives information from a responsible adult as to where the student and his/her family is residing. This includes, but is not limited to, information from a knowledgeable relative or family friend. Students who are sixteen (16) or seventeen (17) years old may not be administratively withdrawn because of lack of attendance. Such student and his/her parent or legal guardian must complete and sign the Formal Declaration of Intent to Withdraw Prior to Completion of Program (FC 600-1757) and the School District's withdrawal form.

The determination of a proper withdrawal code for any student shall be the responsibility of the school principal or his/her administrative designee.

## **WORKER'S COMPENSATION**

The School Board shall provide Worker's Compensation insurance for all employees for properly reported injuries received in the discharge of their duties. The employee shall notify the employee's administrator/ supervisor and/ or school or department secretary immediately once an injury has been sustained.

## **YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS TRAINING (YMHA) REQUIREMENT**

In addition to our SDOC Employee Orientation annual requirement, Florida law requires all school personnel in elementary, middle, and high schools to complete the Youth Mental Health First Aid Training [e.g., [Section 1012.584 – Continuing education and inservice training for youth mental health awareness and assistance, Florida Statutes](#); [Florida State Board of Education Rule 6A-1.094120 – Youth Mental Health Awareness Training and Reporting, Florida Administrative Code \(FAC\)](#)].

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) has identified **Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHA)** as the evidence-based, nationally recognized youth mental health awareness and assistance training program to help school personnel identify and understand the signs of mental health concerns and substance use disorders, and provide such personnel with the next steps to find help for a person who is developing or experiencing mental health concerns or a substance use disorder.

SDOC employees shall receive more information about specific training opportunities from the School District Department of Student Services and their supervising administrators.

## STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The School District of Osceola County, Florida, does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, ethnic or national origin, gender, gender identification, genetic information, linguistic preference, marital status, political beliefs, pregnancy, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, social and family background, or any other basis prohibited by law in its educational programs, services, or activities or in its hiring or employment practices.

Retaliation against an employee for engaging in a protected activity is prohibited.

The School District also provides access to its facilities to the Boy Scouts and other patriotic youth groups, as required by the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act.

Applicants/ individuals with disabilities requesting accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) may call the District's ADA Office at 407-870-4800 for assistance.

Questions, complaints, or requests for additional information regarding discrimination or harassment may be sent to:

Dr. Karyle Green, Chief Human Resources Officer  
The School District of Osceola County  
Department of Human Resources Administrative Services  
799 Bill Beck Boulevard  
Kissimmee, FL 34744  
Phone: 407-870-4800  
Email: [Karyle.Green@osceolaschools.net](mailto:Karyle.Green@osceolaschools.net)

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### ➤ Notice of Equity Coordinators and Non-Discrimination Policies

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## Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida

### Florida Education Standards Commission

#### *Professionalism through Integrity*

This information is available on-line at the following website:

- <http://www.fldoe.org/teaching/professional-practices/code-of-ethics-principles-of-professio.shtml>

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### • Ethics Complaint Report Form

- <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/126a3601c5f14b37ae4e00ad50a9d58f>

### • Harassment/ Discrimination Complaint Report Form

- <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/7d0660a561bb4b179683d16239f7d674>

**APPENDIX**

[2024-2025 Academic Calendar](#)

[2024-25 Staff Work Calendars](#)

[State Board of Education Rule 6A-10.081 – Principles of Professional Conduct for the Education Profession in Florida \(Florida Administrative Code\)](#)

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