

## IV. General Administration

### 4.1 *Security / Access to Schools*

- 4.1.1 Security Measures Authorized – The Superintendent, principals, and facility administrators are authorized to take reasonable and lawful measures to protect against personal injury, trespass, vandalism, theft, and like threats to personal safety, property damage, and financial loss to or on Board property or at school functions and activities. The Superintendent should be made aware of any extraordinary or special measures that may be proposed in anticipation of or in response to any unusual security threat or risk (e.g., unusual surveillance, assignment of additional security personnel).
- 4.1.2 Access Restrictions Authorized – The Superintendent, principals, and facility administrators are authorized to regulate and restrict access to Board schools, buildings, and facilities in order to maintain appropriate security, minimize disruption and distraction within the learning environment, or to avoid a potential risk of harm to a student or employee. To that end, the Superintendent, principals, and facility administrators are authorized to implement building-level requirements and procedures governing access to Board owned or controlled buildings, grounds, property, events, and activities by school and non-school personnel, including family members and relatives, vendors, attorneys, and other visitors, and to adopt “check-in” and “check-out” requirements and procedures for students and employees.
- 4.1.3 Adult Sex Offenders – Adult sex offenders who have been convicted of a sex offense involving a minor must:
- a. notify the principal of the school or his designee before entering school property or attending the K-12 school activity;
  - b. immediately report to the principal of the school or his designee upon entering the property or arriving at the K-12 school activity; and
  - c. cooperate with any efforts undertaken by the principal of the school or his designee to discreetly monitor their presence on school property or at the K-12 school activity.

For the purpose of this subsection, a K-12 school activity is an activity sponsored by a school in which students in grades K-12 are the primary intended participants or for whom students in grades K-12 are the primary intended audience including, but not limited to, school instructional time, after school care, after school tutoring, athletic events, field trips, school plays, or assemblies.

Adult sex offenders have a duty to comply with this policy, and it shall not be construed as imposing an affirmative duty of any kind on the school principal,

his designee, or any other employee, agent, or representative of the school or school system.

[Reference: Ala. Code §15-20A-17]

## **4.2 *Safe Schools Policy (Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco, and Weapons)***

4.2.1 Prohibition on the Possession of Firearms – The possession of a firearm in a school building, on school grounds, on Board property, on school buses, or at school-sponsored functions is prohibited except for authorized law enforcement personnel and as provided by law. For purposes of this policy, the term “firearm” has the same definition as is found in 18 U.S.C §921.

a. *Penalties for violations* – In addition to any criminal penalties that may be imposed, the following penalties will be imposed for unauthorized possession of firearms:

1. *Students* – Students will be expelled for a period of one year. The expulsion requirement may be modified in writing by the Board upon recommendation of the Superintendent on a case-by-case basis. Students who are expelled for firearm possession may not attend regular school classes, but may be permitted to attend alternative schools or education programs established by the Board. Discipline of students with disabilities who violate the firearm possession policy will be determined on a case-by-case basis in accordance with federal and state law. Parents of students who violate this policy will also be notified by the principal of violations.

2. *Employees* – Employees will be subject to adverse personnel action, which may include termination.

3. *Other Persons* – Other persons may be denied re-entry to school property.

b. *Notification of Law Enforcement* – The appropriate law enforcement authority, which may include the city police, county sheriff, and the local district attorney, will be notified by the principal of violations of this policy.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-1-24.1, 24.3 (1975); Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02; Federal Gun Free Schools Act, 20 U.S.C. 7151; Federal Gun Free School Zone Act of 1995 (18 U.S.C. §922(q))]

4.2.2 Prohibition on the Possession of Weapons – The possession of a deadly weapon or dangerous instrument in a school building, on school grounds, on school property, on school buses, or at school-sponsored functions is prohibited except for authorized law enforcement personnel. For purposes of this policy, the terms “deadly weapon” and “dangerous instruments” include but are not limited to explosives, incendiary devices, projectiles, knives with a blade length of more

than two (2) inches, archery equipment, devices designed to expel projectiles at a high rate of speed, any device so classified under state or federal law, and any device either used or intended to be used in such manner as to inflict bodily harm, provided that the terms “deadly weapon” and “dangerous instruments” will exclude, to the extent permitted by law, devices and equipment that are used for the purpose of and in connection with school or Board sanctioned educational, team, or competitive activities.

- a. *Penalties for Violations* – In addition to any criminal penalties that may be imposed, the following penalties will be imposed for unauthorized possession of deadly weapons or dangerous instruments:
  1. *Students* – Students will be disciplined in accordance with the Board’s Code of Student Conduct.
  2. *Employees* – Employees will be subject to adverse personnel action, which may include termination.
  3. *Other Persons* – Other persons may be denied re-entry to school property.
- b. *Notification of Law Enforcement* – The appropriate law enforcement authority, which may include the city police, county sheriff, and the local district attorney, will be notified by the principal of violations of this policy.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-1-24.1 (1975); Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02(1)(b)]

4.2.3 Illegal Drugs and Alcohol – The use, possession, distribution, and sale of alcohol and the illegal use, possession, distribution, and sale of drugs in a school building, on school grounds, on Board property, on school buses, or at school-sponsored functions is prohibited.

- a. *Penalties for Violations* – In addition to any criminal penalties that may be imposed, the following penalties will be imposed for unauthorized possession of illegal drugs or alcohol:
  1. *Students* – Students will be disciplined in accordance with the Board’s Code of Student Conduct.
  2. *Employees* – Employees will be subject to adverse personnel action, which may include termination.
  3. *Other Persons* – Other persons may be denied re-entry to school property.
- b. *Notification of Law Enforcement* – The appropriate law enforcement authority, which may include the city police, county sheriff, and the local

district attorney, will be notified by the principal of violations of this policy.

4.2.4 Tobacco – The use of tobacco products and the illegal possession, distribution, and sale of tobacco products on school property is prohibited. These prohibitions also apply to electronic cigarettes, vape pens, hookah pens, e-hookahs, vape pipes and any similar type of device designed to deliver nicotine, flavor, and other chemicals via inhalation.

a. *Penalties for Violations*

1. *Students* – Students who violate the tobacco prohibition will be disciplined in accordance with the Board’s Code of Student Conduct.

2. *Employees* – Employees who violate the tobacco prohibition will be subject to adverse personnel action, which may include termination.

3. *Other Persons* – Other persons who violate the tobacco prohibition may be denied re-entry to school property.

b. *Parental Notification* – Parents and guardians may be notified of actual or suspected violations of the tobacco prohibition whether or not the student is charged with a violation of Board policy, which includes the Code of Student Conduct.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-1-24.1 (1975); Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02(1)(b)]

4.2.5 Searches – Law enforcement agencies are permitted to make periodic visits to all schools to detect the presence of illegal drugs or weapons and may use any lawful means at their disposal to detect the presence of such substances. The visits will be unannounced to anyone except the Superintendent and principal.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-1-24.1 (1975); Ala. Admin. Code 290-3-1-.02(1)(b)]

4.2.6 Drug and Alcohol Free Environment – All students, employees, volunteers, parents, visitors, and other persons are prohibited from possessing, using, consuming, manufacturing, or distributing illegal controlled substances and alcohol while on Board property or while attending any Board sponsored or sanctioned event, program, activity, or function. Persons who are intoxicated or impaired by the use, consumption, or ingestion of any illegal controlled substance or alcohol are not permitted to be on school property, or to attend or participate in any Board sponsored or sanctioned event, program, activity, or function.

[Reference: ALA. CODE §16-1-24.1, 25-5-330 (1975)]

4.2.7 Adoption of Statutory Penalties and Consequences – Persons who violate the Board’s prohibition of firearms, weapons, illegal drugs, or alcohol will be subject

to all notification, referral, suspension, placement, re-admission, and other provisions set forth in ALA. CODE §16-1-24.1 and 24.3 (1975).

#### **4.3 Accreditation**

The Board will implement and adhere to such accreditation policies, principles, standards, and procedures as may be established or required by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (“SACS CASI”) accreditation division of AdvancED as a condition to receiving or maintaining accreditation.

#### **4.4 Use of Board Property**

4.4.1 Equipment, Supplies, Materials, Vehicles – Equipment, supplies, materials, vehicles, and other movable or consumable property owned by or under lease to the Board may not be used by or made available to persons or entities for private or personal use, benefit, or consumption, or for any non-Board related use or purpose. Such property may not be removed from Board premises except as necessary to serve a school or Board-related function or purpose, and with the knowledge and approval of the appropriate supervisor, administrator, or the Superintendent.

4.4.2 Use of Board Facilities – Schools and other Board owned or controlled facilities may be made available for use by sanctioned or generally recognized school support organizations if the use of the facility will not disrupt school operations or be inconsistent with the purpose and mission of the school system, and if adequate advance provision is made for security, supervision, maintenance, damage prevention, post-event clean-up, liability insurance, and other risk management measures appropriate to the proposed use. Use of Board facilities for non-school organizations may be approved if the foregoing conditions are satisfied and a rental contract (or the equivalent thereof) that includes a reasonable fee or rental charge and other appropriate terms and conditions is approved by the Board.

4.4.3 Advertising – Board property will not be used for commercial advertising except upon such terms and conditions as may be expressly approved by the Board.

#### **4.5 Naming Board Facilities**

The naming of any facility, property, building, or part thereof is subject to Board approval. No facility, property, building, or part thereof, under the control of the Board will be named after or for any living person or for any person who has been deceased for fewer than two years, unless the Board determines that exceptional circumstances exist that warrant such action.

#### **4.6 General Complaints and Grievances**

4.6.1 General Complaints (Grievances) – Subject to the limitations set forth below and elsewhere in this policy manual, any employee or member of the public may

present to the Board a concern, complaint, grievance, or request for corrective action regarding any aspect of school system operations. Before requesting corrective action or relief from the Superintendent or the Board, persons with such complaints, grievances, or requests should present them for resolution to the employee, supervisor, or administrator at the lowest administrative level who has the authority and ability to address the problem or to implement the requested action. The Superintendent is authorized to develop specific procedures that will provide for fair consideration and orderly review of complaints and grievances. Such procedures may not unreasonably burden or delay the presentation or processing of such matters, and will be subject to Board review, modification, and approval.

- 4.6.2 Limitations Regarding Availability and Application of General Complaint/Grievance Policy – The general complaint/grievance policy and any procedures adopted thereunder do not apply to specific complaint or grievance policies and procedures that are established by Board policy or law for application to special factual or legal circumstances (e.g., sexual harassment grievance procedures; review of personnel matters under the Students First Act; “due process” hearings provided under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act). In such instances, the specific statutory, regulatory, or policy-based process is the applicable procedure. The general complaint/grievance procedures that are authorized under the terms of this policy may not be invoked for the purpose of challenging or seeking review or reconsideration of adverse personnel decisions that have received final Board approval. A grievance may be based on an alleged misapplication of Board policies, regulations, or procedures, but may not be used to challenge the Board’s exercise of its discretion to adopt, approve, modify, or repeal a policy, regulation, or procedure or on its failure to exercise such discretion (e.g., adoption of a school calendar, compensation policies, etc.).
- 4.6.3 Student Complaints and Grievances – Complaints, grievances, and requests for corrective action may be brought to the attention of the Board by or on behalf of students with respect to academic, athletic, extracurricular, or other non-disciplinary matters, issues, and concerns only after reasonable efforts to resolve the matter at the school and administrative levels have been exhausted. The Superintendent is authorized to develop specific procedures that will provide for fair consideration and orderly review of such complaints and grievances. Such procedures will not unreasonably burden or delay the presentation or processing of the complaint or grievance and will be subject to review and approval by the Board. Administrative judgments concerning academic or curricular matters or participation in extracurricular activities may be set aside by the Board only upon a showing that the action or decision in question is arbitrary and capricious, fundamentally unfair, or that it violates Board policy or the student’s legal rights.
- 4.6.4 Student Disciplinary Matters – The Board may consider appeals of student disciplinary decisions or actions in accordance with standards and procedures specified in the Code of Student Conduct.

#### **4.7 Title II-ADA, Title IX, and Section 504 Grievances**

4.7.1 **Parents and Students Grievance Procedures** – It is the intention of the Limestone County Schools Board of Education to fully comply with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 as well as the regulation pursuant thereto.

- a. *Criteria* – Any parent or student claiming a violation of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, or of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, and/or the regulations promulgated pursuant thereto, with regard to any educational program or activity of the Limestone County Schools shall within a reasonable time following the alleged violation (whether from a specific, cumulative, or continuing condition) make written complaint to the principal of the school or the coordinator of the center in which such violation is alleged to have occurred.
- b. *Complaint Process* – Upon receipt of such written complaint, the principal or center coordinator shall make appropriate investigation with regard thereto, and shall within fifteen (15) days after receiving the complaint notify the complainant of (1) the decision reached in the matter and (2) the right to appeal to the superintendent within thirty (30) days of such notification. A copy of the complaint with notation of its resolution shall be forwarded to the Title IX compliance officer if related to alleged discrimination on basis of sex or to the Title II or Section 504 coordinator for Limestone County Schools if related to alleged discrimination on basis of disability. Further inquiry as deemed necessary will be made by the appropriate compliance officer or by the Section 504 coordinator.

The investigation under this policy will be conducted in an impartial manner and will be conducted by an impartial decision maker. An impartial decision maker means a person selected to assure that proper procedures are followed and to assure the protection of the rights of both parties. Additionally, both parties will have the right to present witnesses and other evidence to the impartial decision maker relevant to the complaint.

In the event the parent/student's complaint is found credible the District will take steps to prevent recurrence of any discrimination and to correct discriminatory effects upon the parent, student, and others, if appropriate.

- c. *Appeal Procedure* – If the decision of the principal or center coordinator is unsatisfactory to the complainant, then an appeal can be taken to the Superintendent, provided written request therefor is received by the

Superintendent within thirty (30) days after the appealing party has been informed of the decision of the principal or center coordinator. If the appeal is received by the Superintendent within the time limitation, a hearing shall be held before the Superintendent, or a designated representative, within thirty (30) days after receiving the appeal. Within fifteen (15) days following the hearing, the complainant shall be notified of (1) the decision reached in the appeal and (2) the right of further appeal to the Board of Education within thirty (30) days of such notification.

If the decision of the Superintendent, or the designated representative, is unsatisfactory to the appealing party, then a further appeal will be allowed to the Board of Education upon written request therefor within thirty (30) days after notification of the decision of the Superintendent, or the designated representative. If the appeal is received within the time limitation, the Board will either ratify, modify, or reverse the decision of the Superintendent or designated representative, without any further hearing in the matter. The complainant shall be notified within thirty (30) days following receipt of the complainant's appeal to the Board of Education of the decision of the Board, which decision shall be final.

- e. *Alternate Procedure* – If the alleged violation does not occur in on the several schools or center operated by the Board, but occurs in some other facility so maintained, then the initial complaint shall be the filed with the Title IX compliance office if related to discrimination on the basis of sex or the Title II or Section 504 coordinator if related to alleged discrimination on the basis of disability. The addresses of the compliance officers and of the Section 504 coordinator are available from the Office of the Superintendent. The compliance officers or the Section 504 coordinator shall proceed to resolve the dispute in the same manner that the principal of a school or coordinator of a center would if the alleged violation had occurred at a school or center. The right of further appeal to the Superintendent and to the Board of Education shall be preserved as set forth herein above, with the decision of the Board being final.
- f. *Complaints Not Under the Jurisdiction of this Policy* – Section 504 complaints regarding the identification, evaluation, or services provided to a student under Section 504 are addressed by Board Policy “C” which provides a separate process designed specifically to address those complaints.

#### 4.7.2 Employee Grievance Procedures –

- a. *Complaint Criteria* – Employees who believe that they have been discriminated against on the basis of disability in the provision of services, activities, programs, or benefits covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act may file a written complaint with the Human Resources Department.



- b. *Complaint Form* – The complaint should be in writing and contain information about the alleged discrimination including the name, address, phone number of the complaining party and location, date, and description of the problem. Alternative means of filing complaints, such as personal interviews or tape recording of the complaint, will be made available for persons with disabilities upon request.
- c. *Complaint Process* – The complaint should be submitted to the Human Resources Department as soon as possible, but not later than thirty (30) calendar days after the alleged violation. The Human Resources Department will meet with the complaining party to discuss the complaint and possible resolutions. Within fifteen (15) working days of the meeting, the Human Resources Department will respond, in writing, and where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complaining party, such as large print, Braille, or audio tape. The response will explain the position of the Board and offer options for substantive resolution of the complaint.

In the event the employee's complaint is found credible, the District will take steps to prevent recurrence of any discrimination and to correct discriminatory effects upon the employee and others, if appropriate. The investigation will be conducted in an impartial manner and will be conducted by an impartial decision maker. An impartial decision maker means a person selected to assure that proper procedures are followed and to assure the protection of the rights of both parties. Additionally, both parties will have the right to present witnesses and other evidence to the impartial decision maker relevant to the complaint.

- d. *Appeal Procedure* – If the response by the Human Resources Department does not satisfactorily resolve the issue, the complaining party may appeal the decision within fifteen (15) work days after receipt of the response of the Superintendent. Within fifteen (15) work days, the Superintendent will respond in writing, and where appropriate, in a format accessible to the complainant, with a final resolution of the complaint.
- e. *Records Retention* – All written complaints received by the Human Resources Department, appeals to the Superintendent, and records relating thereto will be retained by the Board for at least three (3) years.
- f. *Additional Procedures Authorized* – The Superintendent is authorized to develop such procedures as are necessary to implement this policy.

#### **4.8 Risk Management**

The Board may obtain such liability and other forms of insurance or enter into such risk management agreements, pools, cooperatives, and like arrangements, agreements, or

undertakings as it deems necessary and appropriate to meet legal requirements or to protect the Board, its employees, or its property from risk of loss.

#### **4.9 *Emergency Closing of Schools***

4.9.1 Authority of Superintendent to Close Schools – The Superintendent is authorized to close schools if such action is warranted by weather conditions or other circumstances that pose a risk to the safety and welfare of students and employees, or that render meaningful instruction impossible (e.g., loss of power or other utility services).

4.9.2 Make-Up Dates – To the extent not provided for in the school calendar, any days lost by reasons of an emergency closing will be made up and a revised school calendar approved, if necessary, to reflect any extension or adjustment of the school year required by such action, unless approval to waive the days is obtained in accordance with state law.

#### **4.10 *Internet Safety and Use of Technology***

4.10.1 Access to Technology Resources – The Board permits restricted and conditional access to and use of its technology resources, including but not limited to computers, the “Internet,” network storage areas, and electronic mail. Such access and use is restricted to employees, students, and other persons who are engaged in *bona fide* educational and administrative activities that serve and are consistent with identified educational objectives or authorized support functions, and who, by signing an “Acceptable Use and Internet Safety Agreement,” agree to abide by all Board policies, rules, and regulations regarding technology use. The Acceptable Use Agreement will be developed by the Superintendent for approval by the Board.

4.10.2 Restriction or Loss of Technology Privileges – Persons who violate any Board policy, rule, or regulation regarding technology use may be denied use of the Board’s technology resources and may be subject to additional disciplinary action.

4.10.3 Ownership of Technology Resources and Data – All technology resources, including network and Internet resources, e-mail systems, and computers or other access devices owned, leased, or maintained by the Board are the sole property of the Board. Board personnel may, at any time and without prior notice, access, search, examine, inspect, collect, or retrieve information of any kind from the Board’s technology resources, including computer or related equipment, files, and data, to determine if a user is in violation of any of the Board’s policies, rules, and regulations regarding access to and use of technology resources, for or in connection with any other matter or reason related to the safe and efficient operation or administration of the school system, or for any other reason not prohibited by law. Users of school system technology resources have no personal

right of privacy or confidentiality with respect to the use or content of such resources.

4.10.4 Adoption of Rules and Regulations – The Superintendent is authorized to develop for Board approval additional or more specific rules and regulations regarding access to and use of its technology resources and to require adherence to such rules and regulations through such means as the “Acceptable Use Agreement” and application of appropriate disciplinary policies and procedures. Such rules and regulations will address or provide:

- a. Measures to block or filter Internet access to pictures that are obscene, that constitute child pornography, or that are harmful to minors;
- b. Restriction of access by minors to inappropriate material on the Internet;
- c. The safety and security of minors when they are using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
- d. Prevention of “hacking” and other forms of unauthorized use of or access to computer or Internet files, sites, databases or equipment; and
- e. Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal information regarding minors;
- f. Restriction of minors’ access to harmful material; and
- g. Educating minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

4.10.5 Disclaimer of Liability – The Board makes no warranties of any kind, either express or implied, that the functions or the services provided by or through the Board’s technology resources will be error-free or without defect. The Board will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including but not limited to loss of data or interruption of service.

[Reference: 47 U.S.C. §254(h) and (l)]

#### **4.11 *Political Activity***

Board employees may participate in political activities to the full extent permitted by the United States Constitution and federal and state laws securing the right to engage in such activities, subject to the following restrictions:

- a. Employees may not appropriate Board property or resources for use in political campaigns, and may not engage in partisan political activities (including but not limited to the distribution of campaign material or literature) during regular

school or duty hours or at Board sponsored or sanctioned events, functions, or at activities at which the employee is on duty or assigned official responsibilities;

- b. Employees may not represent their political beliefs or positions on political matters to be those of the Board or other Board officials, or to falsely assert or imply that their political activities or positions are endorsed by or undertaken in the name of the Board or other Board officials;
- c. Candidates and representatives of candidates for political office may not be invited or allowed to address student groups except when such candidates are participating in a forum or like format that is designed to provide all candidates the opportunity to participate. Such forums may be conducted only for appropriate age groups, and with the advance approval of the school principal and the Superintendent; and
- d. Political signs may not be placed on schools or school board property. Campaign literature and other material may not be distributed on Board property during the regular school or work day, and may not be distributed at school or Board sponsored events or activities in a manner that impedes the normal and safe movement of pedestrian or vehicular traffic, that creates any other safety hazard or risk, or that disturbs or disrupts the function, activity, or event.

#### **4.12 *Data Governance and Use***

The Superintendent is authorized to establish procedures governing the storage, use, and sharing of data maintained electronically by the school system. Such procedures shall comply with applicable state and federal law and shall include provisions for data security (including physical security measures), access controls, quality control, and data exchange and reporting (including external data requests, and third party data use.) Nothing in this policy or in any procedures authorized hereunder creates or expands any entitlement to confidentiality of records beyond that which is established by law or specific Board policy.

Any unauthorized access, use, transfer, or distribution of Board data by any employee, student, or any other individual may result in disciplinary action (up to and including termination for employees) and other legal action.