ANNUAL POLICY NOTIFICATION 2014-2015
Policy Administration

Each school year, all employees are asked to take a few minutes to review the attached information, which is intended to inform employees of governance requirements for the 2014–2015 school year. The district's policy manual, ***Policy On Line***, is available online at www.houstonisd.org. It is the responsibility of all employees to know the district's governance including laws, Board policies, and Administrative Regulations.

What is Board *POLICY*?
Policy conveys the Board's intent and describes the district's programs and practices. Simple, direct statements are invaluable to district staff in fulfilling Board mandates and help ensure that policies are readily understood by all. Generally speaking, policies are approved in two readings.

What are *Administrative REGULATIONS* and *EXHIBITS?*
A process or procedure implementing district policy is commonly defined as an Administrative REGULATION (previously referred to as *Standard Practice Memoranda* or *SPMs*). These documents are termed "REGULATIONS" by the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). Forms or supplemental information related to these REGULATIONS are "EXHIBITS."

Organization of HISD's governance documents
Governance documents, comprised of LEGAL statute, LOCAL Board policies, Administrative REGULATIONS, and EXHIBITS are organized according to the TASB codification system by a common coding structure. The sections are devoted to the following areas of school governance:

> A - Basic District Foundations
> B - Local Governance
> C - Business and Support Services
> D - Personnel
> E - Instruction
> F - Students
> G - Community and Governmental Relations

Accessing governance documents
All governance documents (i.e. LEGAL statute, LOCAL Board policies, Administrative REGULATIONS, and EXHIBITS) are incorporated into a single online manual called ***Policy On Line***. Searches can be performed by governance code or keyword.

The following specific district governance should be reviewed annually by all employees as changes may occur throughout the year. Leaders on Team HISD are responsible for ensuring their employees have access to district policies that may affect them. Because not every employee has access to a computer with an Internet connection, leaders are asked to share the documents with employees who lack electronic access as **all employees are responsible for reviewing policies annually**.

If you have any questions or concerns related to governance, contact via e-mail (PolicyAdministration@houstonisd.org) or phone (713-556-6017). Electronic copies of all referenced policies are available by clicking the embedded links. Hardcopies and CDs are available for purchase from Administrative Services.

For All Employees

The district is committed to a culture of trust through action. At the August 9, 2012 Board of Education meeting, Trustees communicated their strong stance on appropriate adult behavior via Resolution: *"Common Decency" and "Respect" are critical elements in the district's Beliefs and Visions; and HISD's* Employee Conduct Policy, DH(LOCAL) *carries serious consequences governing employee conduct; and it is resolved that the Houston Independent School District and the Board of Education call for common decency and respectful behavior in all HISD school settings and work locations and for a renewed commitment to making sure every student and adult respects and accepts all people.* Resolution for Common Decency

Discrimination, harassment, and retaliation: Pursuant to our district's Board goal of providing a safe environment as well as our core value of common decency, all employees need to be versed in our discrimination, harassment and retaliation governance. It is imperative that those who interact with students be aware of their responsibilities to respond immediately and appropriately to allegations. Relevant policies include:

- DH series and FNC series — Policies and exhibits addressing standards of conduct for employees and students.
- DIA(LOCAL) and FFH(LOCAL) — Policies regarding discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, including contact information for reporting such behavior, for employees and students.

Bullying: A dedicated Board policy, FFI(LOCAL), addresses student bullying. Because this conduct may rise to the level of discrimination or harassment, if based on a protected characteristic, this policy should also be reviewed annually by all employees. Reporting procedures related to bullying can also be found at FFI(LOCAL).

Child abuse and neglect: Education commissioner rules require all employees to be aware of how and to whom to report suspicion or knowledge of child abuse or neglect. Please review the state rules on reporting child abuse and neglect, 19 TAC 61.1051, to familiarize yourself with the procedures. The toll-free phone number of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services is 1-800-252-5400. Policy information related to these concerns may be found at:

- BQ(LEGAL), referring to the district plan for addressing child abuse;
- DH(LOCAL) and (EXHIBIT), addressing employee standards of conduct;
- FFG(LEGAL), (LOCAL), and (EXHIBIT), addressing child abuse and neglect; and
- GRA(LEGAL) and (LOCAL), addressing child abuse investigations.

Crisis Intervention: The district has a program that supports early mental health intervention and suicide prevention as outlined in FFB series.

Drug-free workplace: State and federal laws require all new employees to review district policies establishing a drug-free workplace, including DH(LOCAL), DI(LOCAL), and DI(EXHIBIT).

Standards of Conduct and Conflict of Interest: Conflict of interests arises when there is incompatibility of professional duties and personal interests. The following governance defines conduct that constitutes a conflict of interest and specifies the sanctions for violations, including DH series, CAA series, CDC series, and DBD series for all employees. Please see DBD2(REGULATION) for annual disclosure process.

Technology and Technology Resources: The district has an obligation to protect student and employee information. Access to the district's technology resources including email is a privilege and provided for academic and district business purposes. Altering software configurations and/or disabling security features are prohibited. Relevant policies include:

- CQ series — Policies, REGULATIONS, and EXHIBITS addressing technology for employees and students.
- CY series — Policies, REGULATIONS, and EXHIBITS addressing copyright restrictions for employees and students.

Social Media: The district believes that the communication and collaboration inherent in the use of social media can increase student engagement and expand the district's instructional resources when used responsibly and safely. While the district believes there are significant educational advantages to using social media, a suite of policy changes have been approved to ensure the use of social media supported by the district is safe and adheres to federal and state laws as well as local Board policy.

The following governance defines social media:

- Employee Standards of Conduct DH(LOCAL)
- Technology Resources CQ(LOCAL)
- Intellectual Property CY(LOCAL)

Note: If a "series" is indicated, please review all documents with the policy code identifier that begins with the two or three letters shown.

Electronic copies of all referenced policies are available by clicking the links above. Hardcopies and CDs are available for purchase from Administrative Services.

All employees are responsible for reviewing policies annually.

For Teachers and Administrators

Information pertaining to student discipline: Education Code 37.018 requires each teacher and administrator review Chapter 37, sections 37.001 through 37.021, dealing with student discipline, as well as all relevant local district policies. Therefore, in addition to the Chapter 37 sections, please review all (LOCAL) policies in the FN and FO policy series.

We also recommend that teachers and administrators review the Code of Student Conduct and the Elementary and Secondary Guidelines.

Note: Education Code 37.001 requires the Student Code of Conduct to be posted and prominently displayed at each school campus or to be made available for review in the campus principal's office.

Bullying: A dedicated Board policy, FFI(LOCAL), addresses student bullying. Because this conduct may rise to the level of discrimination or harassment if based on a protected characteristic, this policy should also be reviewed annually by all employees. Reporting procedures related to bullying can also be found at FFI(LOCAL).

Information pertaining to field trips: All students shall be invited to participate in school-sponsored field trips and other enrichment activities. The District has adopted reasonable procedures for waiving a deposit or fee if a student or the student's parent or guardian is unable to pay it.

Note: FP(LEGAL) requires posting of the process for waiving fees in a central location in each school facility as well as the school and student handbook.

For Contract Employees

Employment Policies: Education Code 21.204(d) requires that each teacher review the district's employment policies. Employment policies include (LEGAL) and (LOCAL) policies and exhibits found at the following codes within the district's policy manual. Below are some of the district's employee policies.

Policy Code	Policy Title	Policy Code	Policy Title
DAA	Equal Employment Opportunity	DFD	Hearings Before Hearing Examiner
DBAA	Criminal History And Credit Reports	DFE	Resignation
DBD	Conflict Of Interest	DFF	Reduction In Force
DC	Employment Practices	DG	Employee Rights And Privileges
DCB	Term Contracts	DGBA	Employee Complaints/Grievances
DEA	Salaries And Wages	DH	Employee Standards Of Conduct
DEAA	Incentives And Stipends	DHE	Searches And Drug/Alcohol Testing
DEC	Leaves And Absences	DI	Employee Welfare
DECA	Family And Medical Leave	DIA	Freedom From Discrimination, Harassment, And Retaliation
DECB	Military Leave	DK	Assignment And Schedules
DFAC	Return To Probationary Status	DN Series	Performance Appraisals
DFBA series	Suspension/Termination Of Term Contracts	DNA	Evaluation of Teachers