Copies of the Faculty and Staff Handbook are located in the following locations on campus:

- Superintendent’s Office
- Principal’s Office
- Director of Residential Services
- All Cottages

Copies of this handbook are provided in alternate media upon request to all TSB employees.
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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Tennessee School for the Blind (TSB)! The purpose of this manual is to provide information that may help you navigate employment at TSB to include the school and the Tennessee Department of Education. Rather than a school board, TSB is governed by the Commissioner of Education for the Tennessee Department of Education. The delegated authority for direct oversight falls with the Assistant Commissioner of Special Populations and Student Support, Theresa Nicholls.

TSB is a state special school and must also adhere to Tennessee Department of Human Resource policies. In this manual, you will find policies and procedures that are specific to TSB; however, you may find the Tennessee Department of Human Resource policies in the Employee Handbook.
ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE
TSB’s organizational structure is as follows:

Superintendent
Dr. David Martin, Superintendent: (615) 231-7310
Jenny Robinson, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent: (615) 231-7316

Instruction
Dr. Tonja Dandy, Principal: (615) 231-7331
Dr. Alan Chase, Assistant Principal: (615) 231-7319
Dr. Karen Blankenship, Instructional Support: (615) 231-7419

Residential Services
Michelle Cormier, Director of Residential Services: (615) 231-7365
Lamont Bassham, Busing Coordinator: (615) 231-7402

Business Office
June Batty, Director of Business Services: (615) 231-7308
Kelly Benton, Director of Federal Programs: (615) 231-7323
Tim Taylor, Director of Facilities Management, Operations: (615) 231-7353
Kim Stein, Director of Human Resources: (615)-231-7309

Medical Services
Kathy Craft, Director of Medical Services: (615) 231-7398

Food Services
Don Bullock, Director of Food Services: (615)-231-7451

Outreach
Dr. Kathy Segers, Dir. of Accessible Instruc. Materials & Outreach Serv.: (615) 231-7317
Kay Jackson, Admissions Coordinator: (615) 231-7406

Pupil Services
Caleb McLean, Social Worker: (615) 231-7462
Rochelle Moore, School Psychologist: (615) 231-7315
Hyrm Sain, School Counselor (K-6): (615) 231-7335
Kristi Dunning, School Counselor (7-12): (615) 231-7423

Athletics
Andy Joiner, Athletic Director: (615) 231-7320

Campus Monitoring
Campus Monitoring Desk: (615) 231-7366
Campus Monitoring Cell Phone: (615) 630-0935
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GENERAL INFORMATION

About TSB

Tennessee School for the Blind is a state special school that serves students from Pre-K through 12th grade. Students must be residents of the state of Tennessee and have a visual impairment that qualifies them for educational services. Student enrollment is determined by their educational team, including (but not limited to) the student and parents/guardians, general education teachers, special education teachers, and administrators.

TSB has a population of approximately 130 students who are all “legally blind,” though the level of vision loss varies with each student. Some students have a great deal of functional vision that they use effectively as they travel around campus and read printed materials, while other students have vision loss significant enough to require the use of a long cane and Braille. In addition to their visual impairments, approximately 70% of students at TSB have at least one additional disability. These may include hearing loss, an orthopedic/physical disability, a cognitive/learning disability, an emotional/behavioral disorder, or health impairment (i.e. diabetes).

The Outreach Department at TSB provides support and instruction to students in their home school districts and our Resource Center provides large print and Braille materials for schools all across the state. In addition, Summer Enrichment Camps and Pre-School Evaluations are held on campus each summer, giving prospective students and their families a chance to experience Tennessee School for the Blind.

Residential Services

Approximately half of the students who attend TSB are ‘Residential Students’ because they live too far away from TSB to bus in each day. Students stay on campus from Sunday thru Friday, going home each weekend with busses traveling to Memphis, Chattanooga, and Johnson City. Families pick up/drop off students at designated stops along each route. Students who live within Davidson or the immediate surrounding counties typically are ‘Day Students’. These students have the option to stay if they live toward the outer end of the region (over 90 minute bus ride each way), if they participate in extracurricular activities that require before or after school practice, or if there are significant needs in the areas of independent living or socialization that could be addressed by staying on campus.

There are ten cottages on campus – nine of which can house up to twelve students and one which can house twenty students. Additionally, each cottage has a small two bed efficiency-style “apartment,” which is utilized primarily for the “Semi-Independent Living Program” that takes place in the spring each year for graduating seniors. Each cottage is staffed by Youth Service Workers (YSWs or “house/cottage parents”) and the number of staff will vary given the age and need of the students in the cottage. Typically, a cottage will have between two to five YSWs during the after school hours, and one to two YSWs during the overnight hours. TSB has a 24-hour clinic as well as 24/7 security that monitors the campus.

The Residential Program encompasses all the time the students are not in school – starting immediately after the dismissal bell through the start of school the following day. Study
time, recreational activities, meals (including group cooking), off-campus trips, instruction, and support in activities of daily living (ADL) are all included in this program.

Below are the names and phone numbers of the supervisory staff in the Residential Department:

**Director of Residential Services:**
Michelle Cormier – (615) 231-7365

**Supervisors:**
Lamont Bassham, Busing Supervisor – (615) 231-7470
Mary Griffin, Cottage Supervisor – (615) 231-7401
Linda Salaam, Cottage Supervisor – (615) 231-7424
Deborah Grady, Overnight Supervisor—(615) 231-7318

**Common Terms and Acronyms**

Legally Blind – refers to vision loss that meets criteria based on acuity and field loss. Currently a person is considered legally blind if they have acuity of 20/200 or less in the best eye with correction, and/or if they have a visual field of 20 degrees or less. All students at TSB are legally blind.

ADL – Activities of Daily Living – sometimes also referred to as Independent Living Skills or ILS. This term involves any skill that people do on a daily basis in which students at TSB may need instruction and training on how to do these skills independently. Examples are: laundry, cooking, brushing teeth, showering, etc.

ECC – Expanded Core Curriculum – this term refers to curriculum that extends beyond typical academics in which visually impaired students learn ADL and other compensatory skills (such as Braille). These skills are taught and assessed by a certified Teacher of the Visually Impaired.

TVI – Teacher for the Visually Impaired – this is a person who has a degree in education and also has a degree or additional certification in teaching students who have a visual impairment.

O&M Specialist – Orientation and Mobility Specialist – this is a person who has a degree (typically a masters) or certification in teaching visually impaired persons skills related to safe and independent travel in their community. Typically involves instruction in the use of a long cane.

Long Cane – a mobility device in which the cane previews the environment ahead of the traveler to warn them of obstacles or drop offs in their path, and to aid the traveler in walking a straight path. It is also a helpful indicator in alerting the public to their vision loss and can be used by blind and low vision travelers.

IEP – Individualized Education Plan – legal document that guides the educational services for any student with a disability. All TSB students have an IEP.
BIP – Behavior Intervention Plan – an educational document that outlines specific processes and supports that are to be put in place for students with significant behavior needs. This document is a part of a student’s IEP.

Meal Plan – a document that is created by an occupational therapist or speech language pathologist which outlines specific dietary needs for students. This could include – meal texture, pureed or chopped diet, modified fluids, special utensils or plates, etc. This is a very important document as many students with meal plans are choking risks, so the plan must be followed accurately.

Tips for Working with the Visually Impaired

- For some of you, interacting with persons who have a vision loss may be a new experience. Below are some helpful tips for you as you begin this exciting work.
- Vision loss is unique for most individuals – some of our students are “low vision,” meaning they have some usable vision and can see to some degree, while others may be totally blind. In addition, for low vision students, their vision can fluctuate depending on lighting or even their energy level.
- Don’t be afraid to use the words "see" and "look" or refer to colors.
- Unless they have a hearing loss, you do not need to speak unnaturally loud.
- Always introduce yourself when initiating conversation with a blind student. i.e. “Hey Johnny, it’s Ms. Smith, how are you today?” Though many students will learn to recognize your voice, there are many people in their lives, and it is not fair to assume they will always be able to identify you.
- Most of our students enjoy television, movies, and other forms of visual entertainment. They have movie nights and watch TV – just like other kids.
- When giving directions, be specific and use directional terms such as “right” and “left” according to the way they are facing.
- Always ask the student if they would like help before you jump in and assist. Here are some terms that describe the type of assistance a student may need:
  - **Verbal** - this is the most desired type of assistance as it involves very little intervention and allows the student to be independent in his/her movement. Example: You may tell a student their utensil is to the left of his/her plate so it can be accurately attained.
  - **Physical Prompting** - this involves some physical assistance though very minimal. Example: You may tap the top of a student’s left hand if he/she needs to reach with his/her left to find the utensil.
  - **Hand-Over-Hand** - this is the highest level of assistance you can provide in that you are physically assisting movement to complete a task. Example: You may take a student’s left hand in your own, guide him/her to the fork, and help place the fork properly in his/her hand.
- When assisting a student, never “do for” them what they may be able to do on their own. Assume independence in a task until a student demonstrates that he/she needs
help. Our goal is to encourage and support students as they work toward their highest level of independence, and this includes allowing for practice and even mistakes.

EMPLOYEE RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Nondiscrimination Policy

It is the policy of the Tennessee School for the Blind not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, national origin, creed, age, marital status, or disability in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by the Title VI and VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments and Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

No Smoking Policy

Authority:
TCA 39-17-1505 and TCA 39-17-1604 and 46 A.L.R. 5th 813

Purpose:
To protect all inhabitants, especially, students with severe multiple challenges. The ingestion of tobacco products in whatever form and “second hand smoke” has been determined by the Surgeon General of the United States and medical research to adversely affect the health of children and adults. In the particular circumstances of the Tennessee School for the Blind; (1) residential environment and (2) preponderance of students with multiple physical challenges, it is critically vital to protect these students from the harms of tobacco in their environment.

Policy:
It shall be the policy of the Tennessee School for the Blind that tobacco usage of any kind is prohibited in any building, on school grounds or at any school related activity. The effective date of implementation of this policy was July 1, 2006.

Employees and Students who do not adhere to this policy are subject to disciplinary action and fine as established by state statute.

Campus Access

- Identification badges are issued to each employee during their orientation during their first week of employment. They are electronically configured and provide access to various buildings on campus. Should you leave TSB, you must return the badge to the school.
- TSB keys and pucks (pucks provide gate entry) will be assigned to employees as appropriate to their work areas. It is the employee’s responsibility to retain possession and to protect the security of these items. Upon leaving employment at TSB, it is also the employee’s responsibility to return the badge, keys and puck to the school to avoid being charged for the equipment. All keys, pucks and badges should be turned into the Director of Operations or his designee.
- Any uniforms and/or personal protective equipment should be turned in to the employee’s supervisor.
All keys must be returned at the end of each school year for 10 and 11-month employees. An email will be sent annually with specific instructions.

Attendance Policy

Due to the unique nature of TSB, staff attendance directly affects the safety of students. This has led TSB to strengthen some of the existing state attendance policies. The policies listed below will be in addition to the policies listed in the Tennessee Employee Handbook. To ensure the safety of students and staff, the following additional policies must be followed:

Absenteism:
As stated in the Tennessee Employee Handbook, January 2018:

“If you must be late for work or absent because of illness or for an unforeseen circumstance, personally notify your appropriate manager or immediate supervisor as soon as possible by telephone. Certain supervisors may designate a specific call-in time.”

When you have to be late or absent, it is important that you give your supervisor maximum advance notice so that replacement arrangements or work assignments can be made. Your supervisor will cooperate with you on these occasions if you will personally give as much advance notification as possible. However, excessive absenteism is inappropriate. Remember that supervisors must account for and approve all employee absences.”

TSB will require all staff to perform the following steps when they are absent:
Regarding both tardiness and absences, immediately notify your supervisor with a phone call. Leave a message if there is not an answer. All effort must be made to contact the school. Please call 615-231-7300 if you are not able to reach your supervisor.

In the event of sickness, Instructional Staff must notify Dr. Chase and Cassie Goodfred so that a substitute can be identified ASAP.

Within 24 hours, adjust your time in Edison to reflect the absenteism or tardiness unless you are a 10-month employee.

Teachers must complete and submit a gold Employee Leave Request form (available in the Blue Roof Lobby office or the Administration Office to their immediate supervisor.)

Annual Leave:
As stated in the Tennessee Employee Handbook, January 2014:

“All state employees who are employed on a full-time or 12-month basis earn one day (7.5 hours or 8.0 hours) of annual leave monthly, provided they work the major portion of that month. Annual leave is accrued at an increasing rate as indicated on the following chart:
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<th>Annual Days (per month)</th>
<th>Maximum Accrual Days</th>
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<td>0-5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>5-10</td>
<td>1½</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>10-20</td>
<td>1¾</td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Over 20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>42</td>
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Leave earned in excess of the maximum allowable for each group is transferred to the employee's sick leave account annually in the month of the most recent hire date.

The use of annual leave is subject to supervisory approval. You must make annual leave requests to your supervisor as far in advance as possible to avoid any workload problems during your absence. Employees shall be compensated upon separation for their unused accumulated annual leave, unless dismissed for gross misconduct. In this case, employees will forfeit their annual leave balance.

**Leave Reminder:**

If you are not at work during your regular work hours, you must be on authorized leave which is defined as leave that your supervisor has approved. In accordance with personnel rules and regulations, you will be considered having resigned “not in good standing” if you are absent from work without approval for three (3) consecutive workdays.

**Sick Leave:**

As stated in the Tennessee Employee Handbook, January 2014:

“All full-time employees accrue one day (7.5 or 8.0 hours) of sick leave per month, provided they work the major portion of each month. The intent of sick leave accrual is to establish a balance of leave time to cover you during extended emergency times when you must be off the job due to illness. In accruing leave, you are assuring yourself of a regular income when you are absent from work because of illness or injury.”

Sick leave may be used for any of the following reasons:

- Personal Illness
- Disability Due to Accident
- Exposure to a Contagious Disease
- Medical and Dental Appointments
- Illness or Death of a qualifying family member or others who, at the discretion of the appointing authority, have a relationship which merits similar consideration.

If you will be out for more than two consecutive days, your supervisor may require that you obtain a doctor's statement for yourself, or for a qualifying family member, that specifically states why you could not be present to perform your normal job duties.

If you transfer to another agency or department within State government, your accrued leave is transferred with you. Upon retirement, your accumulated sick leave is acknowledged as creditable service in computing your retirement benefits. Each twenty (20) days of sick leave equals one (1) month creditable service.
After an extended illness, you may be required to present a doctor's statement releasing you to return to work. A supervisor may require a doctor's statement for any absence for which sick leave is taken.

Leave without Pay:
Staff who enter into leave-without-pay status will be given a written warning, explaining the implications and possible administrative actions of entering this status. If a staff member returns to this status within a year of the original written notice, the staff member may be subject to administrative action. If a staff member enters leave without pay status during a non-scheduled work period, they will be exempt from this notice.

Bereavement Leave:
Three days of leave will be granted for the death of an employee’s spouse, child, parent, siblings (brothers and sisters), foster parents, and parents-in-law without reducing the employee’s leave balances. Bereavement leave is special leave with pay.
Failure to follow any of these policies could result in administrative action, which may include termination.

Inclement Weather

Authority:
TCA 49-50-1001

Policy:
Due to the unique and/or residential nature of the Tennessee School for the Blind (TSB) and the Tennessee School for the Deaf (TSD), the schools will not close due to inclement weather. Because West Tennessee School for the Deaf and York Institute are not residential, they will follow the local district’s decision on closing.

During occasions of inclement weather, each employee must make a personal judgment pertaining to his or her safety in travel to and from work. Supervisors should encourage their employees to make a conscious decision about their ability to safely travel to and from work. Employees are allowed to use compensatory time, annual leave, or personal time if they decide it is not safe for them to travel.

On days that the LEA in the county in which TSB and TSD are located are closed or delayed in opening due to inclement weather, they will begin classes one hour late. However, should conditions warrant, the superintendent of TSB and/or TSD may close the schools after consultation with the assistant commissioner and when doing so would not cause any lapse in care for the students.

- In the event that TSB is delayed by one hour, all third shift YSW staff must remain with their students until relieved by either split-shift YSW staff or instructional staff.
  In this scenario, third shift YSW staff must be dismissed by the Superintendent or designee (i.e., Director of Instruction or Director of Residential Services) and will be compensated for the additional time.
If a staff member elects to stay on campus overnight (due to the threat of inclement weather), he or she will only be compensated if called to duty. Overnight stays must be approved and coordinated by either Director of Residential Services, Michelle Cormier, or a YSW Supervisor. Michelle can be reached at (615) 428-2596.

Please note that general service employees who call out due to inclement weather must enter annual leave into Edison unless state offices are closed. Use of sick time due to inclement weather cannot and will not be approved. It is very important that we are sufficiently staffed during these events, so please make every effort to be here.

Teachers who call out due to inclement weather must use a personal day. If he/she does not have a personal day available, then a Policy 11 will be initiated. A Policy 11 requires TDOE Fiscal to recoup payment for this day from the employee’s subsequent paycheck(s).

If Metro Nashville Public Schools are closed or on a delayed scheduled, TSB employees may report to work one hour later than normal. Maintenance, Custodial, Food Service, Office Staff and YSW staff are encouraged to report on time if possible.

If the governor closes state offices pursuant to the Department of Human Resources Policy No. 12-037, the Superintendent may close the school if children are not present.

Employees will be notified of closures due to inclement weather via an automated phone call. To ensure you are on the automated phone call list, please contact the Administrative Assistant for the Instructional department.

**Dress Code**

**Authority:**
TCA 4-3-803, TCA 4-4803, TCA 50.001, State Board of Education Minutes. If, at any time, a portion of this policy and/or procedure conflicts with laws or State rules which have jurisdiction over the Tennessee School for the Blind, the law and/or rule shall take precedence over that portion of this policy. The remainder of this policy shall not be void.

**Purpose:**
To establish rules and regulations governing on-the-job dress for employees of the Tennessee School for the Blind.

**Policy:**
It shall be the policy of the Tennessee School for the Blind to adhere to the following, regarding employee on-the-job dress. It shall be the responsibility of the individual employee to abide by these rules. Failure to follow these rules shall result in a review of this policy between the employee and their supervisor, and if necessary, the use of the four-step disciplinary action as outlined in DOE policy DA: 100.02 “Disciplinary Action”.

Employees who do not adhere to the dress code policy will receive appropriate disciplinary action and may be asked to leave campus and return appropriately dressed.

**Exceptions:**
• When due to an illness or disability, an employee’s physician prescribes, in writing, dress that may differ with this policy; the physician’s statement shall take precedent.
• The employee’s supervisor, in consultation with the Superintendent, may make exceptions to the policy, when other dress that is more appropriate to the work assignment is warranted.
• Administrative and Clerical Staff shall wear usual and accepted business attire Monday through Thursday. Business casual is acceptable on Friday and during times that school is not in session. When an employee is to attend a meeting where non-TSB personnel are in attendance or is to attend a departmental function away from the campus, the employee is to wear usual and accepted business attire or business casual, as appropriate to the meeting.
• Educational Staff (including teachers, para-educators, counselors, and therapists) shall wear usual and accepted business or business casual when school is in session. “Casual attire” may be approved by the Director of Instruction dependent on instructional assignment. When an employee is to attend a meeting where non-TSB personnel are in attendance or is to attend a departmental function away from the campus, the employee is to wear usual and accepted business attire or business casual, as appropriate to the meeting.
• Youth Service Worker Staff shall wear appropriate casual dress.
• RCVI and Procurement Staff shall wear appropriate casual dress.
• All Uniformed Staff shall wear appropriate attire for their unit.
• ALL EMPLOYEES shall wear appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as assigned by the School Safety Office.
• The following dress is inappropriate for ALL employees and will not be permitted: Halter-tops, tank tops, crop tops, cut-off shirts, t-shirts, spaghetti-strap or backless dresses (garments that expose the midriff, shoulders, the back, or cleavage), excessively short skirts, cut off shorts, shorts (except women’s knee-length dress shorts), sagging pants, sweat pants, overalls, pajamas/sleepwear, form fitting attire-spandex, leggings with t-shirts, house shoes, flip-flops, tennis or athletic shoes (unless individuals are members of the PE staff) (with casual dress only)

Note 1: Staff may not wear garments with suggestive, obscene, threatening, or offensive language, or that promote the use of drugs, tobacco or alcohol.

Note 2: The school reserves the right to exclude items of apparel or accessories which might prove to be harmful or detrimental to the health, safety, or physical well-being of others, damaging to physical facilities, or disruptive to normal school activities.

Examples of:
“Usual and accepted business attire” are dress shirts and ties with dress pants or suits for men and dresses, blouses, skirts, dress slacks, or suits for women.
“Business casual attire” are pull over shirts with a collar, and less formal slacks.
“Casual attire” are sport slacks, shorts of an appropriate length, sport shirts and blouses, and appropriate jeans.
Code of Conduct

Policy:

Employees of the State of Tennessee are expected to act in a manner that will enhance the name, service, and general impression of the State in the eyes of the general public. This Code of Conduct provides general rules of conduct based on fundamental ethical principles.

Employees shall also uphold the ethical rules governing their professions as well as comply with departmental and State ethics policies. No Code of Conduct can provide the absolute last word to address every circumstance. Therefore, employees are expected to use sound judgment in all of their conduct and ask for help when needed.

Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct and any other policies which may be specific to the employee’s organizational unit may subject the employee to disciplinary action in accordance with the Department of Human Resources Rules and Regulations.

All employees are required to read and sign this Code of Conduct before assuming their job responsibilities.

Code:

• Employees shall conduct themselves in a manner that creates and maintains respect for their work sites, fellow employees and customers, their respective agencies or departments, and the State of Tennessee. All employees are expected to treat others with respect, courtesy, and dignity, and conduct themselves in a professional manner. Violence, threats or intimidation against others is prohibited. Employees shall comply with the Department of Human Resources policy on Violence in the Workplace (Policy 12-060) and any applicable agency policies.

• Employees shall act with honesty and integrity, and avoid situations that involve conflicts of interest. Employees should strive to provide impartial quality service to those with whom they interact, including customers and fellow employees, and avoid providing preferential treatment to any individual or organization. Employees shall comply with their agency’s code of ethics, if any, as well as Governor Haslam’s Executive Order No. 20 concerning ethics and disclosures.

• The consumption of illegal drugs or narcotics or the abuse of any drug or narcotic is strictly prohibited at all times. Use of alcoholic beverages or being under the influence of alcohol while on duty or immediately prior to reporting for duty is strictly prohibited. Employees shall comply with their agency’s drug free workplace and drug testing policies, if any.

• Inappropriate romantic or sexual relationships between supervisors and subordinate staff as well as inappropriate use of supervisory position or influence, are prohibited. Employees shall comply with their agency’s policy on discrimination and harassment, if any. If there is no agency-specific policy, refer to the Department of Human Resources policy on Workplace Discrimination and Harassment (Policy 12-008). This prohibition extends to relationships at any level within the chain of command.
• Illegal activities on the part of any employee, in addition to being unlawful, reflect on the integrity of the State and betray the trust and confidence placed in state employees by the public. It is expected that employees shall comply with all federal and state laws, rules and other regulations. Should an employee be charged with, arrested for or convicted of any felony or misdemeanor, the employee shall follow his or her agency’s policies and procedures regarding reporting, if any.

• Employees shall respect and protect confidential information and abide by all laws governing the possession and use of such information. Confidential information should only be released when it is legally permitted or required. Employees shall not use confidential work information for personal gain.

• Employees should strive to be efficient in the performance of duties. Employees will provide customers with accurate, timely, fair, and understandable information and provide the highest level of customer service possible. Employees shall not provide inappropriate responses to customer care needs.

• While employees are encouraged to participate actively in the public affairs of their communities, clear distinctions must be made between comments, statements, or actions made as a private individual and as a representative of the State. Employees shall not speak on behalf of their department or agency without prior authorization to do so. Employees shall not make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the department or agency.

• Employees shall conserve and protect State property and equipment and not use it for unauthorized purposes. Employees shall comply with the State’s Acceptable Use Policy governing use of computers, email, and network resources.

• Employees shall accurately report work time and attendance. Employees shall not habitually arrive late or fail to complete duties in a timely manner, or have lack of consideration for the time of others.

• Employees shall not be involved in dishonesty, fraud, or misrepresentation. No false statements or entries may be knowingly made in any type of communication, including telephone or electronic communication.

• Employees shall help maintain a healthy, safe and productive work environment which is free from discrimination and harassment, whether based on race, color, national origin, age (40 and over), sex, pregnancy, religion, creed, disability, veteran’s status, or any other factors protected under State and/or federal civil rights law. Employees shall comply with their agency’s policy on discrimination and harassment, if any. If there is no agency-specific policy, refer to the Department of Human Resources policy on Workplace Discrimination and Harassment (Policy 12-008).

• Employees shall not refuse to accept reasonable assignments or intentionally fail to follow lawful instructions.

• Any employee having knowledge that a theft, forgery, credit card fraud, or any other act of unlawful or unauthorized taking, or abuse of, public money, property, or services, or other shortages of public funds has occurred shall report the information immediately to the office of the comptroller of the treasury.
Acceptable Use Policy

Purpose:
To establish guidelines for State-owned hardware and software, computer network access and usage, Internet and email usage, telephone, and security and privacy for users of the State of Tennessee Wide Area Network.

Reference:

Objectives:

- Ensure the protection of proprietary, personal, privileged, or otherwise sensitive data and resources that may be processed in any manner by the State, or any agent for the State.
- Provide uninterrupted network resources to users.
- Ensure proper usage of networked information, programs and facilities offered by the State of Tennessee networks.
- Maintain security of and access to networked data and resources on an authorized basis.
- Secure email from unauthorized access.
- Protect the confidentiality and integrity of files and programs from unauthorized users.
- Inform users there is no expectation of privacy in their use of State-owned hardware, software, or computer network access and usage.
- Provide Internet and email access to the users of the State of Tennessee networks.
- Scope:
  - This Acceptable Use Policy applies to all individuals who have been provided access rights to the State of Tennessee networks, State provided email, and/or Internet via agency issued network or system User ID’s. The scope does not include State phone systems, fax machines, copiers, State issued cell phones or pagers unless those services are delivered over the State’s IP network.

Use and Prohibitions:

1. Network Resources
State employees, vendors/business partners/sub-recipients, local governments, and other governmental agencies may be authorized to access state network resources to perform business functions with or on behalf of the State. Users must be acting within the scope of their employment or contractual relationship with the State and must agree to abide by the terms of this agreement as evidenced by his/her signature. It is recognized that there may be incidental personal use of State Network Resources. This practice is not encouraged. Employees should be aware that all usage may be monitored and that there is no right to privacy. Various transactions resulting from network usage are the property of the state and are thus subject to open records laws.
Prohibitions:

- Sending or sharing with unauthorized persons any information that is confidential by law, rule or regulation.
- Installing software that has not been authorized by the Office for Information Resources of the Department of Finance and Administration.
- Attaching processing devices that have not been authorized by the Office for Information Resources of the Department of Finance and Administration.
- Using network resources to play or download games, music, or videos that are not in support of business functions.
- Leaving workstation unattended without engaging password protection for the keyboard or workstation.
- Utilizing unauthorized peer-to-peer networking or peer-to-peer file sharing.
- Using network resources in support of unlawful activities as defined by federal, state, and local law.
- Utilizing network resources for activities that violate conduct policies established by the Department of Human Resources or the Agency where the user is employed or under contract.

2. Email

Email and calendar functions are provided to expedite and improve communications among network users.

Prohibitions:

- Sending unsolicited junk email or chain letters (e.g. “spam”) to any users of the network.
- Sending any material that contains viruses, Trojan horses, worms, time bombs, cancel bots, or any other harmful or deleterious programs.
- Sending copyrighted materials via email that is either not within the fair use guidelines or without prior permission from the author or publisher.
- Sending or receiving communications that violate conduct policies established by the Department of Human Resources or the Agency where the user is employed or under contract.
- Sending confidential material to an unauthorized recipient, or sending confidential e-mail without the proper security standards (including encryption if necessary) being met.
- Email created, sent or received in conjunction with the transaction of official business are public records in accordance with T.C.A 10-7-301 through 10-7-308, and the rules of the Public Records Commission. A public record is defined as follows:
  
  “Public record(s)” or “state record(s)” means all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, photographs, microfilms, electronic data processing files and output, films, sound recordings or other material, regardless of physical form or characteristics made or received pursuant to law or ordinance or in connection with the transaction of official business by any governmental agency. (T.C.A. 10-7-301 (6)).
State records are open to public inspection unless they are protected by State or Federal law, rule, or regulation. Because a court could interpret state records to include draft letters, working drafts of reports, and what are intended to be casual comments, be aware that anything sent as electronic mail could be made available to the public.

3. Internet Access

Internet access is provided to network users to assist them in performing the duties and responsibilities associated with their positions.

Prohibitions:

• Using the Internet to access non-State provided web email services.
• Using Instant Messaging or Internet Relay Chat (IRC).
• Using the Internet for broadcast audio for non-business use.
• Utilizing unauthorized peer-to-peer networking or peer-to-peer file sharing.
• Using the Internet when it violates any federal, state or local law.

Statement of Consequences

Noncompliance with this policy may constitute a legal risk to the State of Tennessee, an organizational risk to the State of Tennessee in terms of potential harm to employees or citizen security, or a security risk to the State of Tennessee’s Network Operations and the user community, and/or a potential personal liability. The presence of unauthorized data in the State network could lead to liability on the part of the State as well as the individuals responsible for obtaining it.

Statement of Enforcement

Noncompliance with this policy may result in the following immediate actions.

1. Written notification will be sent to the Agency Head and to designated points of contact in the User Agency’s Human Resources and Information Technology Resource Offices to identify the user and the nature of the noncompliance as "cause". In the case of a vendor, sub-recipient, or contractor, the contract administrator will be notified.

2. User access may be terminated immediately by the Systems Administrator, and the user may be subject to subsequent review and action as determined by the agency, department, board, or commission leadership, or contract administrator.

4. Cell Phone Policy (Instructional Staff Only)

In an effort to present a professional work environment for our students and our staff, the following policy is to be followed. The use of cell phones and text messaging by teachers, educational assistants, companions, and substitute teachers will not be allowed during the Instructional day. All personal cell phones should be placed in a purse, bag, desk, or other location where they are not visible during the instructional day.

If communication needs to occur between staff, please use your school provided email, school telephones, or buzz the school office for assistance. Text messaging on personal cell phones is not to be used for communication of school business. In the rare event that a
personal emergency occurs and a staff member must use their personal cell phone during school hours, please step into the hallway from students to use your cell phone and return to the classroom promptly.

**Social Media Policy**

Social media is a term that encompasses the various activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and content creation. It includes, but is not limited to, social networking, the use of websites that allow users to share content, interact, and develop communities around similar interests.

This policy is intended to provide guidelines to ensure that social media tools are used properly, and to address potential risks. The suggestions provided in these guidelines are designed to protect State employees and ensure consistency across agencies. Every State employee is responsible for reviewing and complying with the following policy at work and outside of work.

The lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred in online social networks, and whatever you post on your personal account will likely reflect on the state. Therefore, be aware of your association with the State and thoughtful of how you present yourself online. A personal social media account, while an appropriate place to share personal opinions, is not a place to present an individual opinion as an official agency view. Be mindful that despite all privacy controls, whatever you publish can be seen by many different people, including your supervisors, coworkers, and customers.

- Personal use of social media must be consistent with the terms of use outlined in the Employee Acceptable Use Policy. State employees cannot use personal social media sites for political purposes, to conduct private commercial transactions, or to engage in private business activities during business hours and with State-issued property. State employees are also prohibited from using social media to violate any other applicable state, federal, or local laws, policies, and regulations.
- Employees’ personal use should not be attributable to an agency or department of the State of Tennessee or the employee’s job function at an agency or department. An employee’s use and comments made at social media sites are subject to First Amendment protections. However, any personal use must be conducted in such a manner that a reader would not think that the employee is speaking for or on behalf of his/her agency employer. If you list the State of Tennessee as your employer on your personal social media profiles, any information you post will be held to a higher level of scrutiny.
- Personal use of social media must be in conformance with relevant portions of agency and state workplace policies, laws, and regulations, including but not limited to, harassment and discrimination policies, confidentiality policies, ethics rules, code of conduct, workplace violence, etc.
- You shall not give employment references online. Such references must be handled by your agency’s human resources division.
• Any information that is considered confidential shall not be released on any social media account.
• You shall not use the State of Tennessee logo or any agency logo on any personal postings.
• Your social media accounts may be subject to monitoring without notice or consent if these sites are accessed on State property.
• Violation of any of these policies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
• Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the agency human resources office or Office of General Counsel.

Communications Protocol
It is very important that we convey a very professional image to our stakeholders across the state. As such, please adhere to the following communications protocols:

• All communications should be in Calibri, 12-point font unless enlarged font is needed.
• All email signatures must be uniform. Please use the format below:

  David Martin, Ed.D.
  Superintendent
  Tennessee School for the Blind
  115 Stewarts Ferry Pike • Nashville, TN 37214
  P: (615) 231-7310 • F: (615) 231-7361
  David.Martin@tsbtigers.org
  Facebook Link
  Twitter Link

  “Creating Contributing, Participating Members of Society”

Your name and credentials should be in bold. Your title should be in italics. Make sure you change your phone number and use the correct fax number for your area.
• Please do not include quotes as part of your signature and do not use backgrounds as part of your emails.
• Please respond to all emails within 24 hours of receipt to exclude weekends.
• As a way to connect with our families, you are encouraged to post class/school happenings to our social media sites weekly. Please avoid using student identifiable information, and please be cognizant of students whose parents do not want their pictures publicized.
• Teachers may create classroom or team social media sites; however, please do so via Twitter only.
• From this point forward, we will utilize the following logos as part of our updated branding:

Our staple logo is:

![Staple Logo](image1)

The following logo will be used on letterhead:

![Letterhead Logo](image2)

The following logo may be used for athletics and band:

![Athletics Logo](image3)
Our website logos are as follows:

Professional Development
Teachers and certified staff are required to participate in 5 development days throughout the school year: 3 days are scheduled at the beginning of the school year and 2 additional days are embedded in our school calendar. Teachers and certified staff may opt to attend self-selected professional development offerings. In order for this to replace the 2 additional required PD days, the training must fall on a non-instructional day (i.e., a Saturday or day during Spring Break) and must be at least 7 hours in duration. Self-selected professional development must be approved in advance by the Director of Instruction. Again, the request must be submitted at least four weeks prior to the event, and a copy of the registration information and agenda must be attached. In order to obtain approval, please complete the Professional Development Request form located in the Appendix of this handbook.

Once approved, all registration costs should be paid by the employee and should be submitted with receipts for reimbursement.

Classroom Bell Schedule
The bell schedule is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Begin</th>
<th>End</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>7:35 a.m.</td>
<td>8:25 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>8:30 a.m.</td>
<td>9:20 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>9:25 a.m.</td>
<td>10:10 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>10:15 a.m.</td>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>11:05 a.m.</td>
<td>11:35 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>11:40 a.m.</td>
<td>12:35 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
<td>12:40 p.m.</td>
<td>1:25 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th</td>
<td>1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>2:20 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>2:25 p.m.</td>
<td>3:15 p.m.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Field Trips

The following must be completed well in advance of any field trip:

**Step 1:** Confirm that transportation is available for dates requested. Please see the Transportation Request Form in the Appendix.

**Step 2:** Send Field Trip form to Director of Instruction for approval, as early as possible, but no later than two weeks before the trip. Please see the Field Trip Form in the Appendix.

**Step 3:** The Director of Instruction will submit electronically to cafeteria, clinic, transportation, and finance.

**Step 4:** A few days before the trip, confirm with clinic, cafeteria, finance, etc. for special instructions.

Please see the Field Trip Checklist also located in the Appendix for additional information.

Teacher Contracts

Each 10-month teacher contract includes 180 instructional days, one parent meeting day, four organizational days, five required professional development days, and 10 paid holidays. Teachers accrue 7.5 hours of sick time each month and are afforded two personal days—one per semester.

Each 11-month teacher contract includes 180 instructional days, one parent meeting day, four organizational days, five required professional development days, 10 paid holidays, and 20 additional work days. These additional days MUST be worked within the contract year (i.e., July 1 through June 30). Therefore, teachers must work 10 days in July (at the beginning of the contract) and 10 days in June (at the end of the contract). Exceptions to this requirement must be approved in writing by the Superintendent. 11-month teachers accrue 7.5 hours of sick time each month and are afforded two personal days—one per semester.

All new teachers who do not have the Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI) endorsement must obtain vision endorsement within three years. The first year of employment does not count toward the three year requirement.

Teachers are expected to be in their classrooms by 7:20 a.m. each morning and may not leave until 3:20 p.m. each day.

**Highly Qualified** - The Federal “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB) Act of 2001 requires that all teachers teaching in core academic subject areas must be highly qualified no later than the end of the 2005-06 school year. The core academic subject areas are defined as English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science (biology, chemistry, earth science, physics, and physical science), foreign languages (French, German, Latin, and Spanish), civics and government, economics, arts (visual arts and music), history, and geography. While the federal statute provides a broad definition of the term highly qualified that applies to all public elementary or secondary teachers (must be fully licensed in the state with no licensure requirements waived), it specifically defines the requirements in relation to grade level (elementary, middle and secondary) and experience (new to the profession or existing...
teachers that are not new to the profession). For each grade level, the law requires that teachers demonstrate competency in the applicable subject areas and outlines multiple mechanisms for demonstrating their competency. This plan provides guidance in applying these requirements to Tennessee teachers.

Evaluation- All teaching positions are evaluated using the TEAM rubric emphasizing continuous growth. Frequent evaluations and constructive feedback are given through multiple observations throughout the school year. Please refer to www.team-tn.org for more information.

Educational Assistants

Educational Assistants will receive assignments from the Instructional staff and will assist in the educational process. All Educational Assistants are also required to assist with morning and/or afternoon busing.

To be considered for employment at TSB as an educational assistant, you must either be certified as a paraprofessional or have 48 credit hours of college coursework from an accredited college or university. The paraprofessional exam measures skills and knowledge in reading, math and writing and the ability to apply those skills and knowledge to assist in classroom instruction.

Evaluations—Educational Assistants are evaluated using the S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time sensitive) performance management system. This consists of creating an Individual Performance Plan along with interim and annual reviews documenting progress throughout the year.

Custodians

**General Information**

- Custodians are not to enter classrooms for routine cleanings during instructional times.
- Staff may take two 15-minutes breaks and have a 1-hour lunch period.
  - Breaks cannot be combined or run together to add time to one’s lunch break.
  - Break times will be decided by the custodial supervisor.
  - Breaks and lunches may not be split up without the approval of a supervisor.
  - Break times are not guaranteed and may need to be rescheduled, in order to respond to the needs of the school or students.
- While on break, staff members may check their emails on the computer in designated areas such as the teacher’s lounge.
- All sick and annual time must be approved by the supervisor before it is granted.
  - Sick and annual time must be submitted in Edison and approved.
  - A comment must be left in Edison identifying the use of leave time.
  - If sick time is used, you may be required to bring in a doctor’s note or appointment slip.
• If a custodian is issued a radio, they must have it on at all times except when they are off campus on lunch. Radios are to be left on during breaks.
• When mopping a floor to a bathroom, please place a sign in the doorway to warn students and staff that the bathrooms are being cleaned and floors are wet.
• Check the area before you start to use equipment.
  o Do not run equipment in the halls when students are present.
  o Please be mindful of using vacuums in the office.
• Trash cans are to be emptied at the end of each day after the students are dismissed.
• Hygiene cleanings are to take a priority over anything else.
  o Report all hygiene cleanings to the supervisor.
  o Wear proper PPE when performing hygiene cleanings.
• All custodians are to complete their assigned zones daily. Zones may be checked by any member of administration for cleanliness.

General Requirements:
• Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) is to be worn at all times. Examples: gloves, uniforms, work boots, etc.
• When lifting or moving furniture, all staff are to wear a back brace, regardless of physical condition.
• The chemical safety course must be taken and the custodian certified to use chemicals.
• Custodians are not to give out chemicals to other employees.

Pay Periods
Employees are paid twice each month on the 15th (or last workday prior to the 15th) and the last workday of the month. Paychecks are issued one pay period in arrears. There are mandatory deductions each pay period for FICA and withholding. Direct deposit is mandatory unless there are mitigating circumstances, which must be approved by the Department of Finance and Administration.

State Special Schools Salary Policy
Purpose:
To provide salary structure for teachers and other employees of the state special schools.
Policy:
Teacher salaries, increases provided by the General Assembly, substitute teacher salaries, and supplemental payments for teachers working in additional roles as listed below, shall be effective on July 1, 2015, or as otherwise provided by the General Assembly. If a special school has a teacher contract in effect beyond the July 1, 2015 date, the provisions of this policy related to teacher pay will become effective immediately upon its expiration.
As provided for in TCA 49-50-1003, the salary schedules for teachers and other professional personnel in the special schools shall be reasonably comparable to the salary schedules that
are effective in the LEA where the special school is located. The approved salary schedules for each of the special schools for the 2014-2015 school year are attached.

Pursuant to TCA 49-3-306(h), each local education agency or LEA must develop, adopt, and implement a differentiated pay plan under guidelines established by the State Board of Education in staffing hard to staff subject areas and schools and in hiring and retaining highly qualified teachers. The approved differentiated pay plans for each of the special schools for the 2015-2016 school year are attached and incorporated by referendum into this policy. If there are any discrepancies between the differentiated pay plan and this policy, the differentiated pay plan will take precedent.

The “school year” for the purposes of this policy will be July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017. All teachers whether 10 month or 12 month employees will be paid in 24 equal installments.

- Superintendent: Salary to be determined by the Commissioner of Education.
- Director of Instruction: Salary to be determined by the Commissioner of Education.
- Principal: The base salary of a principal will be the monthly rate he/she would receive as a classroom teacher in the school where he/she is employed. At York Institute only, the principal will also be paid eight dollars ($8.00) per month for each teacher under his/her supervision up to a maximum of twenty (20) teachers. A supplement will be paid in any case where it is necessary to keep the principal’s salary above that of the highest monthly or annual salary paid to any teacher on his/her faculty including any supplements.
- For the 2018-2019 school year, the monthly salary for administrators will reflect any across-the-board salary increases provided by the General Assembly.
- Superintendents will have the opportunity to attend the Tennessee Executive Development Program for Superintendent’s (CEO Institute). They will receive $100.00 per day for each day attended provided they attend a minimum of four (4) days not to exceed a maximum of ten (10) days. A pay supplement will be issued for those meeting the aforementioned eligibility requirements.
- Substitute Teachers: Substitute teachers shall be paid at the same rate as substitute teachers for the county in which the state special school is located.
- Teacher Supplements:
  1. School counselors, speech therapists, media specialists, pre-school counselors, school psychologists, audiologists, and technical coordinators will be provided up to 5% of his/her salary as additional compensation for performing duties required beyond the normal teaching day. The specific duties shall be outlined and included in the affected teacher’s official personnel file.
  2. Supervising teachers shall have an additional salary allowance equal to 10% of his/her salary.* Specific duties shall be outlined and included in the supervising teacher’s personnel file. The supplement shall be figured on 10 months for supervising teacher work unless the teacher works for 11 or 12 months and is a supervising teacher during the 11th and/or 12th month. In such case, the supplement shall be paid in the 11th and/or 12th month as well.
  3. Teachers performing duties related to the following extracurricular activities that occur beyond the normal teaching day will be paid supplements* as follows:
Athletic Director 5%

Plus $200 annually per sport supervised (equity payment)

Assistant Athletic Director 3%

Concert Band Director 5%

Chorus Director 5%

Head Cheerleader Coach 7.5%

Assistant Cheerleader Coach 5%

Head Basketball or Football Coach 10%

Plus $750 annually for each TSSAA Classification as equity payment

Assistant Coach Basketball or Football 7.5%

Head Coach all other sports 7.5%

Assistant Coach all other sports 5%

Sponsor (Debate, Drama, Newspaper, Speech, Student Council, Academic Bowl, Forensics, Yearbook, Pep Club, JROTC) 5%

A coach must attend the rules meeting in the sport(s) he/she is coaching if TSSAA holds rules meetings in those sports. All coaches are subject to TSSAA rules and regulations as coaches and must conduct themselves in a manner becoming of a coach and a representative of the school. All coaches are responsible to the administrative head of his/her school and may be replaced as determined by the administrative head of the school with approval from the appropriate Assistant Commissioner.

4. Any supplement added beyond those already in effect must receive programmatic approval from the Office of the Assistant Commissioner who has responsibility for the State Special School, from the TDOE Budget Office, and the Commissioner. This does not preclude the reassignment of a supplement from one teacher to another teacher.

5. The supplements of this provision shall be calculated on salary earned during the 10 month regular school year program and not on the 11th and/or 12th month worked. Such supplements will be paid to the teacher over 24 pay periods.

6. A sponsor supplement may extend beyond the 10 month regular year when the teacher is required by the superintendent to perform the extra assignment beyond the 10 month regular school year and as long as the assignment is worked each month during the 10 month regular school year program. Prior approval must be given by the administrative head of the school with approval from the appropriate Assistant Commissioner.

7. Fair Labor Standards Act exempt employees and teacher bus drivers will be paid a supplement for bus driving duties on the same pay schedule as the bus drivers in the local school system in which the special school is located. Supplemental
pay will be made through the regular supplemental pay process used to increase or reduce pay to teachers during the regular payroll process.

8. The two Junior ROTC teachers at York will be paid in accordance with the US Department of Army’s pay and allowance schedule.

9. The vocational agriculture teacher at York shall receive an annual supplement of 7.5% for serving as manager of the school farm for 12 months.

10. Total supplements will be limited to 17.5% plus equity payments for any one special school employee.

11. Salaries for teachers employed on twelve or eleven months basis shall be the same monthly rate as teachers employed on 10 months basis with like experience and degree.

12. When a teacher is in a leave without pay status, the teacher’s salary shall be reduced (the next pay period) using the follow method:

   For the daily rate, divide the teacher’s annual salary by the number of work days in the school year, or

   For the hourly rate, divide the daily rate by 7.5 hours.

Performance Evaluation

TEAM:

Teachers, Related Service Providers, and Administrators will be evaluated using the TEAM evaluation process. The minimum number of required observations will be based on licensure status and evaluation scores from the previous year (for year 3).

Teachers with individual growth scores:

- Fifty percent of the evaluation to be comprised of student achievement data—
  - Thirty-five percent based on student growth
  - Fifteen percent based on additional measures of student achievement adopted by the State Board of Education and chosen through mutual agreement by the educator and evaluator.

- Fifty percent of the evaluation is determined through qualitative measures such as teacher observations, student perception surveys, personal conferences, and review of prior evaluations and work.

Teachers without individual growth scores:

- Forty percent of the evaluation to be comprised of student achievement data—
  - Twenty-five percent based on school-wide or system-wide student growth as represented by the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS)
  - Fifteen percent based on additional measures of student achievement adopted by the State Board of Education and chosen through mutual agreement by the educator and evaluator.

- Sixty percent of the evaluation is determined through qualitative measures such as teacher observations, student perception surveys, personal conferences, and review of prior evaluations and work.
Additional information regarding the TEAM evaluation is available at www.team-tn.org

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT (noncertified staff):

All non-certified employees will be evaluated using Performance Management 2.0, which is a SMART goal performance management system. SMART = Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time Sensitive. All full-time executive class employees are evaluated using this process. The steps involved in the performance management system are:

- Individual Performance Plan (IPP)
- Interim Reviews
- Final Evaluation

Individual Performance Plan (IPP)

The IPP is a set of goals (termed ‘Work Outcomes’) and action steps directly related to work activities that will guide your performance evaluation over the course of a year.

Interim Reviews

During an evaluation cycle you will receive two interim reviews where your supervisor will provide feedback on your performance for each of your work outcomes. The goal of these discussions is that the (YSW or other staff members) and the supervisor participate in a review of their work together; the YSW makes observations, comments, and suggestions for the supervisor's benefit, and the supervisor does the same in regard to the YSW's job performance. Two interim reviews must be completed during the evaluation cycle; however, more reviews are possible if the supervisor feels it necessary. The supervisor will always document interim reviews, including specific suggestions in all areas where a YSW may need improvement.

Final Evaluation

The final evaluation occurs at the end of the evaluation cycle. The supervisor's observations are recorded in the final assessment of the YSW's performance of job responsibilities for that twelve-month cycle.

For additional information regarding the S.M.A.R.T. goals evaluation system follow this link: http://www.tn.gov/dohr/ogc-er/performance/perform.shtml
STUDENT RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Student Discipline

Purpose:
All students and staff have a right to learn and teach in a safe, calm, and productive learning environment. Discipline should always be for the purpose of teaching the student self-control, respect, and courtesy toward others.

Beliefs: Staff members should serve as role models for good behavior. Positive reinforcement of good behavior is always preferable to negative reinforcement for inappropriate behavior.

Guidelines:
- No student of the Tennessee School for the Blind shall EVER be subjected to corporal punishment by a staff member of the school.
- No student of the Tennessee School for the Blind shall EVER be verbally berated, harassed, intimidated, or abused in any manner by a staff member of the school.
- The Tennessee School for the Blind Student Code of Conduct and the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act will be used as guidelines for determining consequences for inappropriate behavior.
- Any disciplinary event that requires suspension from school, in-school suspension, restriction from cottage, sports, music, or other extra curricula or school activities should be reported, in writing, to the student’s parent(s) and their local school system by the Director of Instruction or the Director of Residential Services.
- Continuous or extreme episodes of misbehavior may be grounds for conducting a Manifestation Hearing and IEP Team meeting to determine if the misbehavior was influenced or a result of the student’s disability and if the Tennessee School for the Blind is an appropriate placement to meet the student’s educational needs.

RestRAINT Policy

Restraining a student at TSB is only used when it is the last measure available. The techniques used are taught by qualified instructors and are designed not to injure the student. However, minor injury may occur during physical restraint. Physical restraint is defined as a behavioral management technique involving the use of physical contact such as body holds to stop a dangerous or unsafe behavior or limit movement. It does not include the use of mechanical devices, such as belts, straps, etc., or the use of chemical restraints, such as medications. It may be something as simple as putting a hand on the student’s arm and walking him to his/her seat.

TSB personnel are Certified Restraint Training (CRT) trained to identify anger/rage cycles and divert a potentially violent situation before it occurs. However, with the unpredictable nature of some students, it may be necessary to restrain a student only under extreme circumstances. Before physical restraint is used all other measures will be used including, but not limited to: Calling for a supervisor, using distraction and other de-escalation techniques, evacuating the
room, verbal redirection, reduced verbal interaction, reduced demands, providing choices, and other techniques. Physical restraint will be discontinued when the student no longer poses a risk to self or others. The parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified immediately. Physical restraint or the threat of physical restraint will not be used to punish the student in any way.

Physical restraint techniques are used only to protect the student or a staff member if the following circumstances arise:

- The student is doing self-injurious behavior that could arise serious bodily harm, such as banging head on the wall. Uniquely
- The student is hurting another student severely, threatening serious bodily injury in such a way that the potential victim(s) cannot escape, or hurting a staff member, and all other means to stop the student have failed.
- The student is putting himself in a dangerous situation and without the physical restraint will suffer serious bodily injury. For example, the student is running into the street into oncoming traffic.

When physical restraint is used, the following requirements must be met:

- No physical restraint shall be used that prevents the student from breathing or communicating or in such a way that places excess pressure on the student’s chest, back, or extremities. A restrained student must be continuously monitored to ensure that the breathing of the student in such physical restraint is not compromised.
- Opportunities to have the physical restraint removed shall be provided to the student who indicates that he or she is willing to cease the violent or dangerous behavior.
- The physical restraint must be removed when it is no longer necessary to protect the student or ensure the safety of others. A student shall be released from physical restraint within fifteen minutes after the initiation of the physical restraint, except when precluded for safety reasons.

The following documentation must be made following the use of physical restraint:

- The staff member who administered the physical restraint shall verbally inform the Director of Instruction, Director of Residential Services, and/or Superintendent of the physical restraint as soon as possible, but no later than 30 minutes after the physical restraint was used.
- A written report must be submitted within one school day to the Director of Instruction (if physical restraint occurs during school hours) or Director of Residential Services (if physical restraint occurs outside school hours) when physical restraint is used.
- The Director of Instruction, Director of Residential Services, Superintendent, or a designee shall verbally notify the parents/guardians as soon as possible, but no later than three hours after the incident, that physical restraint was used.
- A written report summarizing the circumstances and nature of the physical restraint shall be mailed, e-mailed, or faxed to the parents/guardians within 36 hours following the use of physical restraint and a copy placed in the student’s confidential file.
Bullying Policy

In 2005, the State of Tennessee General Assembly enacted Anti-Bullying laws (TCA §§49-6-4501 through 49-6-4506). These laws were amended in 2011 to include cyber-bullying and acts that do not occur at school or school sponsored events. It is therefore mandated that the Tennessee School for the Blind have a specific and detailed policy that focuses on anti-bullying or bullying prevention. This policy has been and is being developed in cooperation and conjunction with stakeholder input which includes administration, faculty, staff, parents, students, and community organizations and agencies. This policy is developed to enhance and complement the already existing School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (SWPBIS) program already in place.

Bullying of any type will be prohibited at the Tennessee School for the Blind and will be dealt with according to Federal, State, and School District laws and policies. (Please see the Code of Student Conduct and Overview of Disciplinary Levels within the Parent/Student Handbook). At the beginning of each school year and throughout, the student body as well as the faculty and staff of the Tennessee School for the Blind will receive training on the definitions harassment, intimidation, bullying, and cyber-bullying, and how to implement our bullying prevention program. Parents will also be informed about this policy to promote awareness of the harmful effects of bullying. To ensure a common understanding of what bullying is, the following definitions will apply.

Legal Definition of Bullying:

Any act that substantially interferes with a student’s educational benefits, opportunities, or performance that occurs on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school provided equipment or transportation, or any official bus stop that has the effect of:

- Physically harming a student, or damaging a student’s property.
- Knowingly placing a student or students in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student’s property.
- Causing emotional distress to a student or students.
- Creating a hostile educational environment.

If the act takes place off school property or outside of a school-sponsored activity, it is considered bullying if:

- It is directed specifically at a student or students, and
- Has the effect of creating a hostile educational environment or otherwise creating a substantial disruption of the educational environment or learning process.

Types of bullying may include the following:

- Physical – uses force and body strength to overpower their victims
- Verbal – intimidating and harming their victims using words
- Relational – work to damage a victim’s social status and relationships
- Cyber – use of electronic forms of bullying, such as email, cell phones, and social networking sites to harass their victims.
Legal Definition of Harassment

Legal Definition of Harassment: Creates a hostile environment when the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school. It is the responsibility of any and all students, faculty, and/or staff as well as parents to report any behavior observed that may appear to be bullying, harassment, or intimidation as defined above. Students should report bullying behavior to an adult. Adults should report observed bullying behavior to the designated administrator, or to the school’s Pupil Services committee. If the student or adult wishes to remain anonymous for fear of retaliation, then it is suggested that they report the incident directly to administration, but must be aware that remaining anonymous may limit the school’s ability to handle the situation, may affect disciplinary action, and/or remediation of the accused. Information will only be given or shared on a need to know basis. Prior to filing a complaint against someone, it is recommended that the individual ask three questions:

1) Does the action involve an aggressive behavior?
2) Is this behavior repeated over time....is there a pattern?
3) Is there an imbalance or perceived imbalance of power or strength?

It is the responsibility of the Director of Instruction to investigate any harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying when a student reports to the Director, or any teacher or school counselor that physical harm or a threat of physical harm to the student or student’s property has occurred. The Director of Instruction may designate an investigator for this specific purpose who will report directly back to the Director. Following any required investigation, the Director or designee will report the findings, along with any disciplinary action taken, to the Superintendent and the State Board of Education. Phases of the investigation process will include:

1) Complaint intake,
2) Evidence gathering,
3) Evaluation of evidence, and
4) Investigative report.

Based upon the findings of the investigation and recommendation of the investigator or the Pupil Services committee, consequences and/or appropriate remediation for the person found to have committed bullying pursuant to the school’s Code of Student Conduct and Overview of Disciplinary Levels stated elsewhere in this handbook will be taken.

In a more concentrated effort to eliminate bullying, harassment, and intimidation at the Tennessee School for the Blind, the school will be implementing the Olweus Bullying Prevention program, a well-researched, best practice of individual and school wide responsibility for identify and preventing bullying within the learning community. Specific information about the Olweus Bullying Prevention program will be available for parents and students at the beginning of each school year during registration and Family Day activities.
For more in depth information about this program, you may also contact Hyrm Sain at Hyrm.Sain@tsbtigers.org, or call at 615-231-7335.

Federal laws regarding bullying, harassment, and intimidation include the following:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin;
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 which prohibits discrimination based on sex and covers sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, pregnancy discrimination, marital status, and athletics; and,
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 which prohibits discrimination based on disability.
Acknowledgment

I, _____________________________, have read and understand the contents of this manual. I also understand that failure to abide by the policies and procedures herein may result in disciplinary action.

_____________________________________
Signature

___________________
Date

Please sign and return to Kim Stein, HR Director.