

To adopt Forethought's revisions to sections D and E of the policy manual to replace all former sections D and E of the policy manual except section D-12 which will be included in section J and to replace sections A-10.1 and A-10.2 of the policy manual and to add a new section F of the policy manual (which does not replace the current section F of the policy manual) as a **"First Reading."** **(Attachments are provided in your packets)** (Presented by Mr. Steve Katz)

## ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall approve an annual budget for the general fund and each special revenue fund for the fiscal year July 1 to June 30, no later than September 15th of each year. The School Board shall submit a copy of its adopted budget to the State Superintendent no later than September 30th of each year, as well as a general summary of the adopted budget. The summary shall include projected revenues, expenditures, and beginning and ending fund balances. In addition, no later than September 30th of each year, the School Board shall post the most recent budget and general summary on its website.

It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent and designated members of his/her staff to prepare the operating budgets for submission to the School Board. The budgets shall be prepared on forms in accordance with such rules and regulations as may be prescribed by statutes and by the State Superintendent of Education. Said budgets shall be submitted to the School Board for the purposes of revision and approval prior to submission to the State Superintendent.

After the School Board has reviewed the proposed budget and made desired changes, if any, the School Board shall cause to be published a notice in the official journal stating that the proposed budget is available for public inspection. The notice shall also state that a public hearing on the proposed budget shall be held specifying the date, time and place of the hearing. The proposed budget shall not be considered for adoption or otherwise finalized until at least one public hearing has been conducted on the proposal. The notice shall be published at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the date of the first public hearing and may be published in the same advertisement as the notice of availability of the proposed budget and the public hearing.

The School Board shall certify completion of all action required by publishing a notice in the same manner as provided above.

No budget shall be approved where expenditures exceed the expected means of financing. Except as provided in policy *DCE, Budgetary Item Transfer Authority*, no items of expense may be incurred through the year except as provided for in the approved budget unless a revision is adopted by the School Board. The budget shall be reviewed periodically and such financial reports as the School Board directs shall be prepared and presented to the School Board by the Superintendent.

### DAILY OPERATIONS

The adoption of the original budget and the adoption of all subsequent amendments by the School Board constitute the authority of the Superintendent or his/her designee and administrators of the School Board to incur liabilities and authorize expenditures from the respective budgeted funds during the fiscal year. The Superintendent and the Business

Manager shall have the authority to enter into routine and necessary contracts or agreements to carry out the general business operations of the School Board.

ASSURANCE OF EQUITABLE FUNDING

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall provide funding for education through local, state and federal sources and shall use funds for the benefit of all students in the district, in compliance with all regulations by state and federal agencies granting such funds. The School Board shall allocate such funds equitably and in the interest of all of the Morehouse Parish Public School students. This ensures equivalence among schools in the provision of curricular materials and instructional supplies. It is the policy of the Morehouse Parish School Board that it maintains an equitable and fair equivalence among the schools in the allotment of teachers, administrators, and auxiliary personnel.

CONTINGENCY FUNDS

Each of the various funds which comprise the total budget of the Morehouse Parish School Board shall contain a budgetary item for funding unforeseen and unpredictable events which may occur each year. Expenditures from this line item shall be authorized by the Superintendent and/or his/her designee.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:88, 17:89, 39:1301, 39:1302, 39:1303, 39:1304, 39:1305, 39:1306, 39:1307, 39:1308, 39:1309, 39:1310, 39:1311, 39:1312, 39:1313, 39:1314, 39:1315.

## BUDGET PLANNING AND PREPARATION

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall cause to be prepared a comprehensive budget presenting a complete financial plan for the ensuing fiscal year. The revenues shall be those normally expected from constitutional, statutory, and regular sources and shall not include probable revenues that may arise from doubtful or contingent sources.

### PRESENTATION OF BUDGET DOCUMENT

The revenues and expenditures in the budget shall be listed and classified in such manner and substance as shall be prescribed by the State Superintendent of Education, and shall detail as nearly as possible the several items of expected revenues and expenditures, the total of which shall not exceed the expected means of financing, composed of the beginning fund balance, cash balances, and revenues. If during the course of the fiscal year it becomes evident that revenues or expenditures may vary substantially from those budgeted, then the School Board shall prepare and adopt an amended budget.

A budget proposed for consideration by the School Board shall be accompanied by a proposed budget adoption instrument which shall be necessary to adopt and implement the budget document. The adoption instrument shall define the authority of the Superintendent and administrative officers of the School Board to make changes within various budget classifications without approval by the School Board as well as those powers reserved solely to the School Board. The budget document shall at least include the following:

1. Basis of Budgeting - Budgets shall be prepared on the same basis of accounting as that used in the financial statements and in accordance with generally accepted accounting procedures.
2. Organization of the Budget - The accounts of the School Board shall be organized on the basis of funds, each of which is considered a separate accounting entity. The operations of each fund shall be accounted for with separate sets of self-balancing accounts that comprise its assets, liabilities, fund equity, revenues and expenditures.
3. Funds Budgeted - Activities of the General Fund and the Special Revenue Fund shall be presented to the School Board for adoption annually. Formal adoption of any Debt Service and Capital Projects funds shall not be required but shall be included in the operating budget for informational purposes.
4. Budget Format - The presentation of the budget shall include fund balances, revenues, expenditures and other financing sources/uses. Revenues shall be budgeted by source and expenditure by function as defined by the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). The format shall also include the presentation of actual data from the prior fiscal year, budget data for the current fiscal year, and budget data for the proposed budget year.

5. Budget Adoption Instrument - The operating budget shall be accompanied by a proposed budget adoption resolution.
6. Balanced Budget - The total budgeted expenditures shall not exceed the total estimated funds available within each fund.
7. Budget Message - A budget message shall be prepared and signed by the Superintendent that articulates priorities and issues for the budget for the new year. The message should describe significant changes in priorities from the current year and explain the factors that led to those changes.

#### STAFF INVOLVEMENT IN THE PREPARATION OF THE BUDGET

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall assign various budgetary areas to members of the administrative staff. Each staff member who is assigned a budget area shall recommend what items are placed in his/her area of the budget, and shall also be held responsible for seeing that expenditures in those areas stay within budget boundaries. Should any administrative staff member encounter problems in any budget area after the budget has been adopted by the Morehouse Parish School Board, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall be promptly notified in order that adjustments might be made according to School Board policy.

#### PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN THE BUDGET

Upon completion of the proposed budget and its submission to the School Board, the Superintendent shall publish a notice in the newspaper stating that the proposed budget is available for public inspection. The notice shall also state that a public hearing on the proposed budget shall be held with the date, time and place of the hearing specified in the notice. The guidelines following public involvement shall apply as follows:

1. Public Inspection of the Proposed Budget - The proposed budget document shall be made available for public inspection at least fifteen (15) days prior to the date of the public hearing. Also, it shall be made available to the public at the School Board office during regular office hours Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.
2. Public Hearing on the Proposed Budget - The Morehouse Parish School Board shall conduct at least one public hearing prior to the adoption of the proposed budget.

#### ADOPTION PROCEDURES

All action necessary to adopt or revise the budget shall be taken in open meeting requiring a *simple majority of the School Board* voting in favor of the proposed resolution and/or

revisions for adoption or any revision.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:88, 17:89, 39:1304.

## PERIODIC BUDGET RECONCILIATION

The Morehouse Parish School Board authorizes the Superintendent to reconcile and/or to recommend changes in the budget during the fiscal year, provided the schools are operated for the minimum term according to the rules and regulations of the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE). Such changes shall be subject to the approval of the School Board, and in no event shall a budget amendment be adopted proposing expenditures which exceed the total estimated funds available for the fiscal year. Any change in the budget that necessitates an expenditure from the general fund balance must conform to the processes set forth in policy *DC, Annual Operating Budget* relative to expenditures from the fund balance.

Revisions to the budget shall be required when the following conditions exist:

1. Revenue collections plus projected revenue collections for the remainder of the year, within a fund, are failing to meet estimated annual budgeted revenues by five percent (5%) or more;
2. Actual expenditures plus projected expenditures for the remainder of the year, within a fund, are exceeding the estimated budgeted expenditures by five percent (5%) or more; or
3. The actual beginning fund balance, within a fund, fails to meet the estimated beginning fund balance by five percent (5%) or more, and the fund balance is being used to fund current year expenditures.

Each administrative position charged with budget authority shall be responsible for the periodic review and analysis of assigned budgets. Should any adjustments or corrections to any budgetary line item become necessary, such change should be brought to the attention of appropriate finance personnel. Any change shall require approval of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:88, 17:89, 39:1301, 39:1302, 39:1303, 39:1304, 39:1305, 39:1306, 39:1307, 39:1308, 39:1309, 39:1310, 39:1311, 39:1312, 39:1313, 39:1314, 39:1315.

## GENERAL FUND RESERVE

The Morehouse Parish School Board, in its budget preparations, feels that the General Fund's fund balance should not be excessive, nor should the fund balance be too low as to put the School Board in a financial position of not being able to meet its current obligations or being able to meet its unanticipated large dollar emergency obligations. The School Board further feels that the fund balance should be large enough to continue the school system's daily operations during a financial adjustment period for declining revenues and/or increasing expenditures.

Therefore, the School Board sets as its goal the minimum fund balance for the General Fund as not to drop below seven percent (7%) of the General Fund's total annual expenditures. Every effort should be made to maintain the General Fund's minimum fund balance. Once the seven percent (7%) goal is reached the use of General Fund balance below the established minimum limit of seven percent (7%) shall only be for unanticipated or unforeseen events of a non-recurring nature.

### FUND BALANCE REPORTING IN GOVERNMENTAL FUNDS

Fund balance will be reported in governmental funds under the following categories based on the definitions provided by ("GASB") Statement No. 54, *Fund Balance Reporting and Governmental Fund Definitions*.

**Non-spendable fund balance** – not in spendable form or legally or contractually required to be maintained intact. This category includes items that are not expected to be converted to cash such as inventories and prepaid items. It also includes the long term amounts of loans and notes receivable.

**Restricted fund balance** – amounts that can be spent only for specific purposes stipulated by constitution, external resource providers, or through enabling legislation. (Examples are grants and taxes restricted to a specific use.)

**Committed fund balance** – amounts that can only be used for the specific purposes determined by formal action of the Morehouse Parish School Board. Those committed amounts cannot be used for any other purpose unless the School Board removes or changes the specified use by taking the same type of action it employed to previously commit the funds. The formal action of the School Board that commits fund balance to a specific purpose should occur prior to the end of the reporting period, but the amount, if any, which will be subject to the constraint, may be determined in the subsequent period. The commitment should be specific as to the purpose.

**Assigned fund balance** – amounts that are constrained by the School Board's intent to be used for specific purposes, but are neither restricted nor committed.



Intent should be expressed by the School Board. The authority for making an assignment is not required to be made by the Board but the authorization to assign amounts for a specific purpose may be made by the business manager and Superintendent.

**Unassigned fund balance** – the residual classification for the general fund.

**Special revenue funds** are used to account for and report the proceeds of specific revenue sources that are restricted or committed to expenditure for specified purposes other than debt service or capital projects. The term proceeds of specific revenue sources establish that one or more specific restricted or committed revenues should be the foundation of the special revenue fund. (Examples are grant funds and tax funds dedicated for specific purposes.) The restricted or committed proceeds of specific revenue sources should be expected to continue to comprise a substantial portion of the inflows reported in the fund.

Disclosure will be made in the notes to the financial statement of the specific purpose of each special revenue fund.

Should the Morehouse Parish School Board set aside amounts for use in emergency situations or when shortages or budgetary imbalances arise, those amounts are subject to controls that dictate the circumstances under which they can be spent. The formal action that imposes the parameters for spending should identify and describe specific circumstances under which a need for the expenditure of those funds for stabilization arises. Those circumstances should be such that they would not be expected to occur routinely. The circumstances for use of such "stabilization funds" should be very specific. Simply to be used "in an emergency" or to "offset an anticipated revenue shortfall" would not be specific enough. Stabilization amounts should be reported in the general fund as restricted or committed if they meet the requirements. Arrangements that do not meet the requirements to be reported as restricted or committed fund balance shall be reported as assigned fund balance.

In the event that amounts have been expended when an expenditure is incurred for purposes for which both restricted and unrestricted balance is available, it shall be considered to have been expended from the restricted fund balance for that item.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 17:88, 17:89, 39:1304.

**BUDGETARY ITEM TRANSFER AUTHORITY**

The Morehouse Parish School Board, Superintendent and his/her staff shall continually evaluate the school district's budget and maintain required records which support entitlement and disposition of public funds. Line items in the budget may be changed, with School Board approval, at any time during the fiscal year, provided such change is consistent with existing laws and regulations of the State of Louisiana. Any request for modification of a budgetary line item shall be approved by appropriate supervisory personnel and submitted to the Superintendent for consideration.

The Superintendent, as secretary-treasurer of the School Board, shall be authorized and in his/her sole discretion, to make such changes within the various budget classifications as he/she may deem necessary provided that any reallocation of funds affecting in excess of five percent (5%) of the projected revenue collections shall be approved in advance by action of the School Board. The Superintendent shall be directed to advise the School Board in writing when:

1. Revenue collections plus projected revenue collections for the remainder of the year, within a fund, are failing to meet estimated annual budgeted revenues by five percent (5%) or more;
2. Actual expenditures plus projected expenditures for the remainder of the year, within a fund, are exceeding the estimated budgeted expenditures by five percent (5%) or more; or
3. The actual beginning fund balance, within a fund, fails to meet the estimated beginning fund balance by five percent (5%) or more, and the fund balance is being used to fund current year expenditures.
4. Any reallocations of funds that do not require School Board approval may be made by the Superintendent.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§39:1301, 39:1302, 39:1303, 39:1304, 39:1310.

## DEBT LIMITATION

The Morehouse Parish School Board may, as authorized by the Constitution and laws of the State, borrow money, incur debt, issue bonds, levy taxes, or pledge uncollected taxes or revenues, with the approval of the electorate and the consent of the State Bond Commission. Before incurring any form of debt whatsoever, the School Board is required by law to obtain the consent and approval of the State Bond Commission. The School Board may incur debt and issue bonds for the purposes of acquiring and/or improving lands, purchasing, erecting and/or improving school buildings, and/or for other purposes allowed by state law which, including the existing bonded debt of the School Board for all bonded purposes, may not exceed fifty per centum (50%) of the assessed valuation of all property as ascertained by the last assessment for the parish.

Notification to the State Bond Commission shall be required by the School Board whenever the transfer of funds authorizing indebtedness or payment on outstanding indebtedness has not been made in a timely manner.

## RECORDKEEPING

The School Board shall continuously maintain:

1. A list of all Louisiana municipal securities for which the School Board is the issuer or is obligated to repay;
2. A copy of all continuing disclosure agreements relating to the securities to which the School Board is a party;
3. If, pursuant to a continuing disclosure agreement in which the School Board is a party, the School Board shall be responsible for filing notices of changes in bond ratings, a list of current ratings for such securities, if any.

All records required to be kept by the School Board under state law shall be subject to inspection by the legislative auditor and/or the School Board's auditor.

*Municipal securities* shall mean bonds, notes, certificates, or other written obligations for the repayment of borrowed money, including obligations to refund any security, which are issued by the School Board.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:89, 17:1371, 18:1281, 18:1282, 18:1283, 18:1284, 18:1293, 39:471, 39:554, 39:562, 39:1410.60, 39:1421, 39:1438.

## SHORT TERM NOTES

The Morehouse Parish School Board, in accordance with state law, shall have the authority during any fiscal year to borrow money in anticipation of current revenues for that fiscal year and to pledge the current revenues for said fiscal year for the payment of such loan or loans if funds on hand are not sufficient to meet current expenses. The amount of borrowed funds shall not exceed three-fourths of the anticipated revenue and such loans shall be due and payable not later than the close of the current fiscal year. All such loans shall be approved by the School Board prior to negotiation and execution of the loan.

### CERTIFICATE OF INDEBTEDNESS

The School Board may issue certificates of indebtedness covering that portion of the cost of public improvements, or the payment of other obligations, benefits, and/or services, which are to be borne or to be paid by the School Board under contracts payable out of the revenues of subsequent years. Such certificates shall mature over a period not exceeding ten (10) years from the date of such certificates, with limited exceptions permitted by state statutes. Before any certificate of indebtedness can be issued, the School Board shall certify to the State Bond Commission the purpose and need for any such certificates.

All notes or other evidence of indebtedness of the School Board, unless specified otherwise by law, shall be signed by the President and the Superintendent and shall be limited as prescribed by law.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:88, 17:89, 17:98, 33:2923, 33:2923.1, 39:1410.60, 39:1425.

## LOCAL TAX REVENUES

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall annually adopt a resolution by June 1, or thirty (30) days after the receipt of assessment information from the parish assessor, levying parish school taxes as authorized by the Constitution, the laws of the State of Louisiana and the voters of the parish, including taxes to meet the principal and interest on outstanding bonds, and shall forward such resolution to the assessor of Morehouse Parish. The assessor may grant an extension in writing if the School Board cannot formally adopt said resolution.

Special tax elections shall be called for the electors of the parish to vote on renewal of existing taxes and/or for additional tax millage for school purposes as provided by state law.

On the date and at the hour and place specified in the notice of election, the School Board, in public session, shall examine and canvass the returns and declare the results of the election. The results shall be promulgated by one publication in the official journal of the School Board.

Ref: Constitution of Louisiana, Art VI, Sec. 23, Sec. 29, Sec. 32; Art. VIII, Sec. 13(c);  
La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:98, 17:1373, 47:338.84, 47:338.92, 47:1705.

## STATE REVENUES

The Morehouse Parish School Board receives state funds as an appropriation by the state legislature in accordance with the latest *Minimum Foundation Program* formula approved by the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the state legislature. The Louisiana Department of Education shall transmit to the School Board no later than the 25th of each month one-twelfth of the amount payable under the formula, unless the Louisiana Department of Education notifies the School Board of a change in the schedule.

Ref: Constitution of Louisiana, Art. VIII, Sec. 13; La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:25, 17:25.1, 17:89.1.

**FEDERAL REVENUES**

It is the objective of the Morehouse Parish School Board to provide equal educational opportunities for all children within this parish. It is the expressed desire of the School Board and district to participate in federal revenue programs which provide direct educational and auxiliary services or opportunities to students enrolled in the district schools. School district personnel shall monitor all federal revenue programs that the school district might benefit from and seek to secure as much federal funding from these programs as necessary.

## TAX AND BOND ELECTIONS AND SALES

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The Morehouse Parish School Board shall call elections for the public to vote on tax or bond revenue issues. Every bond, tax, or other election at which a proposition or question is to be submitted to the voters shall be held only on one of the dates set forth by state law or upon proper application to and approval of the State Bond Commission on a date not provided by statute. The proposition placed on the ballot submitted to the voters in any bond election shall state the kinds and sources of revenues which shall be pledged to retire the bonds, should the proposition be successful.

### PUBLIC NOTICE OF SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

Public notice of the date, time, and place of any meeting at which the School Board intends to propose, increase, or renew any ad valorem property tax or sales and use tax, authorize the calling of an election for submittal of such question to the voters shall be both published in the official journal of the School Board no more than sixty (60) days nor less than twenty (20) days before such public meeting and shall be announced to the public during the course of a public meeting no more than sixty (60) days nor less than twenty (20) days before such public meeting; and notice of such meeting shall be written and hand delivered or transmitted by email to each voting member of any governing authority of a political subdivision that is required to approve such a measure previously adopted by another governing authority and to each state senator and representative in whose district all or a portion of the political subdivision is located, no more than sixty (60) days nor less than twenty (20) days before such public meeting. Email delivery shall be made to the official email address of such voting members or legislators and to any other address provided in writing to the School Board by such a voting member or legislator.

If such a meeting is postponed or cancelled, notice of any subsequent meeting to consider taking action regarding property or sales taxes shall be published in the School Board's official journal no less than ten (10) days before the subsequent meeting.

If consideration of or action upon the tax proposal is postponed, or if no action was taken regarding the tax proposal, then any subsequent meeting to consider the tax proposal shall be subject to the provisions under section *Public Notice*, above.

If, at a meeting held in accordance with above provisions, the School Board adopts such a measure, the provisions shall not apply to a subsequent meeting if the only action taken at the subsequent meeting is one which results in a change to the previously adopted measure that reduces the rate or term of the tax in the measure and thereby reduces the total amount of tax that would be collected under the measure, or substantially reduces the cost to the School Board of any bond or debt obligation to be incurred by the School Board.

### CANVASS OF ELECTION



On the date and at the hour and place specified in the notice of election, the School Board, in public session, shall examine and canvass the returns and declare the result of the elections. The result shall be promulgated by one publication in the official journal of the School Board.

### SALE OF BONDS

After an election authorizing the School Board issuance of bonds, the School Board may proceed to issue the bonds within the parameters approved by the electors. The School Board shall have the authority to adopt all procedures necessary for the authorization, sale, and delivery of bonds, including the right to enter into all contractual arrangements as may be necessary to effectuate the purpose for which the bonds are being issued under terms determined by the School Board.

Bonds issued may be sold at a public or private sale upon such terms, in the manner and by following such procedures as may be determined by the School Board. No bond issued shall be required to be registered with the secretary of state or any other office or official.

All bonds shall be advertised for sale on sealed bids, which advertisement shall be published at least once a week for three (3) weeks, the first publication to be made at least fifteen (15) days preceding the date fixed for the reception of bids. Advertisement shall be in the official journal of the governing authority at least fifteen (15) days before the date fixed for the reception of bids. Notice of sale shall also be published once a week for three (3) weeks preceding the date fixed for the reception of bids, either in a financial paper published in the city of New York or the city of Chicago, or in a newspaper of general circulation published in a city of the state of Louisiana having a population of not less than twenty thousand (20,000) inhabitants, according to the last federal census.

Ref: Constitution of Louisiana, Art. VI, Sec. 30, Sec. 33; La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:1372, 17:1373, 18:1281, 18:1282, 18:1283, 18:1284, 18:1285, 18:1286, 18:1293, 39:503, 39:505, 39:521, 39:570, 39:1421, 39:1422, 39:1423, 39:1424, 39:1424.1, 39:1425, 39:1426, 39:1427, 39:1428, 39:1429, 42:19.1.

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Public notice of the date, time, and place of any meeting at which the School Board intends to propose, increase, or renew any ad valorem property tax or sales and use tax, authorize the calling of an election for submittal of such question to the voters shall be both published in the official journal of the School Board no more than sixty (60) days nor less than twenty (20) days before such public meeting and shall be announced to the public during the course of a public meeting no more than sixty (60) days nor less than twenty (20) days before such public meeting; and notice of such meeting shall be written and hand delivered or transmitted by email to each voting member of any governing authority of a political subdivision that is required to approve such a measure previously adopted by another governing authority and to each state senator and representative in whose district all or a portion of the political subdivision is located, no more than sixty (60) days nor less than twenty (20) days before such public meeting. Email delivery shall be made to the official email address of such voting members or legislators and to any other address provided in writing to the School Board by such a voting member or legislator.

If such a meeting is postponed or cancelled, notice of any subsequent meeting to consider taking action regarding property or sales taxes shall be published in the School Board's official journal no less than ten (10) days before the subsequent meeting.

If consideration of or action upon the tax proposal is postponed, or if no action was taken regarding the tax proposal, then any subsequent meeting to consider the tax proposal shall be subject to the provisions under section *Public Notice*, above.

If, at a meeting held in accordance with above provisions, the School Board adopts such a measure, the provisions shall not apply to a subsequent meeting if the only action taken at the subsequent meeting is one which results in a change to the previously adopted measure that reduces the rate or term of the tax in the measure and thereby reduces the total amount of tax that would be collected under the measure, or substantially reduces the cost to the School Board of any bond or debt obligation to be incurred by the School Board.

### CANVASS OF ELECTION

On the date and at the hour and place specified in the notice of election, the School Board, in public session, shall examine and canvass the returns and declare the result of the elections. The result shall be promulgated by one publication in the official journal of the School Board.

### SALE OF BONDS

After an election authorizing the School Board issuance of bonds, the School Board may proceed to issue the bonds within the parameters approved by the electors. The School Board shall have the authority to adopt all procedures necessary for the authorization, sale, and delivery of bonds, including the right to enter into all contractual arrangements as may be necessary to effectuate the purpose for which the bonds are being issued under terms determined by the School Board.

Bonds issued may be sold at a public or private sale upon such terms, in the manner and by following such procedures as may be determined by the School Board. No bond issued shall be required to be registered with the secretary of state or any other office or official.

All bonds shall be advertised for sale on sealed bids, which advertisement shall be published at least once a week for three (3) weeks, the first publication to be made at least fifteen (15) days preceding the date fixed for the reception of bids. Advertisement shall be in the official journal of the governing authority at least fifteen (15) days before the date fixed for the reception of bids. Notice of sale shall also be published once a week for three (3) weeks preceding the date fixed for the reception of bids, either in a financial paper published in the city of New York or the city of Chicago, or in a newspaper of general circulation published in a city of the state of Louisiana having a population of not less than twenty thousand (20,000) inhabitants, according to the last federal census.

Ref: Constitution of Louisiana, Art. VI, Sec. 30, Sec. 33; La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:1372, 17:1373, 18:1281, 18:1282, 18:1283, 18:1284, 18:1285, 18:1286, 18:1293, 39:503, 39:505, 39:521, 39:570, 39:1421, 39:1422, 39:1423, 39:1424, 39:1424.1, 39:1425, 39:1426, 39:1427, 39:1428, 39:1429, 42:19.1.

## **CASH MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENTS**

Strategies for proper cash management and investment of available funds shall be reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis to ensure that investment rules and guidelines expressed in this policy are being followed according to current statutory provisions. The monetary assets of the Morehouse Parish School Board shall be held in trust by the fiduciary (fiduciaries) designated by the School Board. Cash management and the investment of funds shall be managed by the Superintendent and/or his/her designee.

### CASH MANAGEMENT

All aspects of cash management operations shall be designed to ensure the absolute safety and integrity of the School Board's financial assets.

Cash management activities shall be conducted in full compliance with prevailing local, state and federal regulations. Furthermore, such activities shall be designed to adhere to guidelines and standards promulgated by applicable professional organizations.

Operating within appropriately-established administrative and procedural parameters, the School Board shall aggressively pursue optimum financial rewards, while simultaneously controlling its related expenditures. Therefore, cash management functions which engender interaction with outside financial intermediaries shall be conducted in the best financial and administrative interests of the school system. In pursuit of these interests, the School Board shall utilize competitive bidding practices whenever practicable, affording no special financial advantage to any individual or corporate member of the financial or investment community.

The School Board shall authorize the Superintendent and staff to design and enforce written administrative regulations, guidelines, and procedures relating to a variety of cash management issues such as the eligibility or selection of various financial intermediaries, documentation and safekeeping requirements, philosophical and operational aspects of the investment function, and such other functional and administrative aspects of the cash management program which necessitate standard setting in pursuit of appropriate prudent, enhanced protection of assets or procedural improvements.

### DEPOSITORY BANK

Louisiana statutes require School Boards to select a fiscal agent for purposes of receiving or depositing funds of the School Board. The bank selected as fiscal agent shall be asked to enter into a fiscal agency contract or such other necessary instruments setting forth the duties, responsibilities, and agreements pertaining to said fiscal agency.

The fiscal agency bank, when selected, shall serve for a term as agreed to by the School Board and until its successor shall have been duly selected and qualified, and shall pledge approved securities, as provided for in the fiscal agency contract subject to the regulations

under state law.

### PLEDGED SECURITIES

Funds on deposit shall be collateralized in an amount at all times equal to 100% by pledged "approved securities" in accordance with state law to adequately protect the funds of the School Board.

The School Board shall periodically monitor the amount of approved securities to assure that an amount not less than 100% on deposit with the depository bank, less any applicable *Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation* (FDIC) insurance, is pledged.

The bank shall have the right and privilege of substituting approved securities only upon obtaining the prior written approval of the School Board. Such approval may be granted by facsimile transmission. The approved securities shall be valued at their market value.

### INVESTMENT OPTIONS

The School Board, in accordance with statutory provisions, may invest any funds which are available for investment and are above the immediate cash requirements of the School Board, from whatever source derived, in statutorily sanctioned investments. Types of investments include, but are not limited to, Direct U.S. Treasury obligations, bonds, debentures, notes issued by or guaranteed by federal agencies; bonds, debentures, notes, or other evidence of indebtedness issued by the state of Louisiana or any other state of the United States, or any of the political subdivisions of any state, or by any domestic U.S. corporation, with limited exceptions noted in La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §33:2955; or certificates, or time certificates of deposit in any bank domiciled or having a branch office in Louisiana or any other federally insured investment.

The School Board shall authorize the Superintendent, as treasurer, and/or his/her designee, to invest any surplus funds in whatever type deposit that shall offer the School Board the most favorable rates of interest.

Investments of the School Board shall be guided by the following:

1. Cash management and investment activities shall be conducted in a manner consistent with prudent business practices applied by governmental entities and shall be in compliance with applicable statutes.
2. Funds determined by the Superintendent or chief financial officer to be in excess of immediate cash requirement shall be invested only in statutorily permitted obligations.
3. Appropriate emphasis in making any investment shall be in the following order:
  - A. To ensure safety of the principal amount.
  - B. To ensure liquidity of funds to meet all obligations of the School Board.

C. The yield of the investments.

In no event shall monies be considered available for investment unless and until such funds are determined by the Superintendent or chief financial officer, in the exercise of prudent judgment, to be in excess of the immediate cash requirements of the fund to which the monies are credited. As a criteria in making such a determination, any amount of money exceeding ten thousand dollars which is on demand deposit to the credit of the School Board, or to the credit of any fund and which is not required to meet an obligation for at least forty-five (45) calendar days, or any amount of money exceeding one hundred thousand dollars which is on demand to the credit of the School Board or to the credit of any fund and which is not required to meet an obligation for at least fifteen (15) calendar days shall be construed available for investment.

Any time that may be advisable, the School Board may cash and liquidate any of the investments authorized herein which are purchased for any particular fund. The proceeds of any such liquidation shall be credited to the fund from which the authorized investments were originally purchased.

Interest Earnings

The interest earned on any such investment shall be credited to the fund from which the investment was acquired or it may be applied to the payment of the principal and interest of the outstanding bonded indebtedness of that fund.

LIQUIDATION OF INVESTMENTS

At any time that may be advisable, the School Board may cash or liquidate any of the investments authorized herein which are purchased for any particular fund. The proceeds of any such liquidation shall be credited to the fund from which the authorized investments were originally purchased.

PROHIBITED TRANSACTIONS

The following arrangements are expressly prohibited:

1. Any transactions not specifically authorized by this policy.
2. The purchase of securities on margin.
3. Direct purchases of single family or commercial mortgages.
4. Purchases of foreign bonds.
5. Collateralized mortgage obligations that have been stripped into interest only or principal only obligations.
6. Inverse floaters or structured notes. For purposes of this section, *structured notes* shall mean securities of U.S. Government agencies, instrumentalities, or government-sponsored enterprises which have been restructured, modified, and/or reissued by private entities.

UTILIZATION OF OUTSIDE PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

The School Board may engage the support services of an Investment Counselor, so long as it can be clearly demonstrated that such engagements produce "net financial advantage" or necessary financial protection of the School Board's resources.

All such engagements shall require the written authorization of the Superintendent, who shall provide written justification for the engagement to the School Board for approval.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:99, 33:2955, 39:1211, 39:1212, 39:1219, 39:1221, 39:1222, 39:1223, 39:1225, 39:1226.

## GRANTS

The Morehouse Parish School Board encourages the development of proposals to federal, state, and private granting agencies and other sources of financial aid for subsidizing such activities as innovative projects, feasibility studies, long-range planning, and research and development. All such activities shall meet the following criteria:

1. They are based on a specific set of internal objectives that relate to the established goals and objectives of the school district.
2. They are to provide measures for evaluating whether or not project objectives are being or have been achieved.
3. The execution of all projects shall conform to state and federal laws and to the policies of the School Board.
4. The application and implementation of any such activities is to be inclusive of students at all schools within the parish, to the maximum extent possible within the terms and provisions of each grant.

The School Board shall be notified of all grants. The School Board President and/or the Superintendent shall be authorized to sign all grant proposals, subject to the School Board's right to recall or rescind the application. For any grant opportunities where the School Board serves as the fiscal agent, it shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent to ensure that all eligible entities which operate public schools within Morehouse Parish are provided with an opportunity to participate in the grant application prior to submission of the grant proposal. Eligibility for these purposes shall be determined by the criteria set forth in each grant request.

Grant awards shall be coordinated through Central Office personnel as designated by the Superintendent. In addition to adhering to the rules and regulations required by the grantor agency, all grant awards shall follow all established policies and administrative procedures of the School Board. An assessment shall be conducted prior to submission of any grant proposal to determine any residual or recurring costs that may be incurred by the School Board.

When the grant award letter or written notification is received and budgeted expenditures have been approved by the granting agency, grant funds may be expended by the Superintendent or designee/recipient. In the event that awarded funds differ from the amount applied for in the initial submission, the School Board reserves the right to appropriately revise the budget and scope of the initial application to align to the amount actually awarded. Such revisions shall be at the sole discretion of the Superintendent, subject to the School Board's right to review and revise any such determinations; notification of any such modifications shall be required to be provided to each entity



participating in such grant at the earliest practical opportunity. Grant awards and grant budgets shall be submitted to the School Board as soon as possible after the grant award letter or written notification is received. The School Board shall be informed of any recurring or residual costs related to grants and reserves the right to terminate a grant at any time and return any unexpended funds to the grantor.

Grants written at the schools shall be pre-approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee and accounted for as school funds and shall follow all applicable School Board policies related to school-based accounting and recordkeeping. However, any grants written at the schools that exceed \$10,000 or benefit more than one school, shall be assigned to an instructional supervisor as project administrator.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.

## FEDERAL AND NON-FEDERAL GRANTS — CASH MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

### LAWS APPLICABLE TO CASH MANAGEMENT

The Morehouse Parish School Board will comply with applicable methods and procedures for payment that minimize the time elapsing between the transfer of funds and disbursement by the School Board in accordance with the *Cash Management Improvement Act* at 31 CFR Part 205. Generally, the School Board receives payment from the Louisiana Department of Education on a cost reimbursement basis. In most cases, expenditures are obligated and liquidated before reimbursement. 2 CFR 200.305. The only *exception* to this rule would be for the July and August payroll accruals.

However, if the School Board receives an advance in federal grant funds, the School Board will remit interest earned on the advanced payment quarterly to the federal agency. The School Board may retain interest amounts up to \$500 per year for administrative expenses. 2 CFR 200.305(b)(9).

### INTERNAL CONTROLS PROCEDURES OVER CASH MANagements

The Grants Management Coordinator will request reimbursement for actual expenditures incurred under the federal grants either monthly or quarterly (depending on the state requirements). The source document used to prepare the reimbursement request is the *Request for Summary Form* that is generated by the GFA system. The expenditures Reported on the *Request for Summary Form* are pulled directly from the general ledger System in GFA. The Grants Management Coordinator shall review the expenditures on the *Request for Summary Form* for reasonableness. Each time a request is made the Grants Management Coordinator shall runs a *Revenue and Expense* for the month of expenses requested and shall compare it to the amount requested on the *Request for Summary Form*. If there are any differences, the Grants Management Coordinator shall determine if any adjustments need to be made. The Grants Management Coordinator shall enter the information into the reimbursement requests. After the Grants Management Coordinator prepares the request of reimbursement, it is printed out and sent to the Business Manager to review, sign, and submit. The majority of reimbursement requests are prepared and submitted to the state through the eGrants website. There a few grants that are emailed to the Louisiana Department of Education. The Grants Management Coordinator shall update an excel spreadsheet of funds requested which also shows the remaining balance of the grant. The Grants Management Coordinator shall give the General Ledger Accountant a copy of each reimbursement request which he/she uses as support in identifying/recording the funds when they come in. The Louisiana Department of Education usually processes reimbursement requests within 1-3 weeks. Consistent with state and federal requirements, the School Board will maintain source documentation supporting the federal expenditures (invoice, time sheets, payroll stubs, etc.) and will make such documentation available for the Federal Agency or Louisiana Department of Education to review upon request.

ADVANCES

To the extent the School Board receives advance payments of federal grant funds; the School Board will strive to expand the federal funds on allowable expenditures as expeditiously as possible. Specifically, the District shall attempt to expend all drawn downs of federal funds within seventy-two (72) hours of receipt. However; the advance payment method of receiving federal funds is rarely used.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.

## FEDERAL AND NON-FEDERAL GRANT ALLOWABLE/UNALLOWABLE COST

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall adhere to all applicable cost principles governing the use of federal and non-federal grants and contracts. This policy addresses the importance of properly classifying costs, both direct and indirect, charged to grant funded projects and the proposed and actual expenditures are consistent with the grant agreement and all applicable federal rules embodied in the Uniform Grant Guidance at 2 CFR 200. District personnel who are responsible for administering, expending or monitoring grant funded programs should be well versed with the categories of costs that are generally allowable and unallowable.

A large portion of financial support for the Morehouse Parish School District comes from the federal government. This funding is in the form of direct support for District programs and often includes reimbursement for indirect costs. The Federal Uniform Grant Guidance identifies the criteria that must be met in order to properly charge these costs to federally funded projects. Individual non-federal awards may also include special terms and conditions that must be met before costs can be charged or reimbursed, which must also be considered before allocating certain costs to the award.

### REQUIREMENTS

All costs expended using federal funds must meet the following general criteria laid forth in the Uniform Grant Guidance at 2 CFR 200, Subpart E:

- **Be necessary and reasonable** for the proper and efficient performance and administration of the grant program
- **Be allocable** to federal awards under the provisions of the federal circular
- **Be authorized** and not prohibited under state or local laws or regulations
- **Conform** to any limitations or exclusions set forth in the principles, federal laws, terms and conditions of the federal award, or other governing regulations as to types or amounts of cost items
- **Be consistent** with policies, regulations, and procedures that apply uniformly to both federal awards and other activities of the School Board
- **Be accorded consistent treatment.** A cost may not be assigned to a federal award as a direct cost and also be charged to a federal award as an indirect cost
- **Except as otherwise provided** for in the federal circular, be determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles

- **Not included as a cost** or used to meet cost sharing or matching requirements of any other federal award in either the current or a prior period
- **Be net** of all applicable credits
- **Be adequately documented**

#### DIRECT AND INDIRECT COSTS

Allowable and allocable costs must be appropriately classified as direct or indirect. In general, direct costs are those that can be identified specifically with a particular cost objective while indirect costs are those (a) incurred for a common or joint purpose benefiting more than one cost objective, and (b) not readily assignable to the cost objectives specifically benefitted, without effort disproportionate to the results achieved. It is essential that each item of cost be treated consistently in like circumstances either as a direct or an indirect cost. If an indirect cost rate is going to be utilized for charging indirect rates, the rate must first be approved by the applicable approving authority.

#### COST TRANSFERS

Any costs charged to a federal or non-federal award that do not meet the allowable cost criteria must be removed from the award account and charged to an account that does not require adherence to federal *Uniform Grant Guidance* or other applicable guidelines.

Failure to adequately follow this policy and related procedures could result in questioned costs, audit findings, potential repayment of disallowed costs and discontinuance of funding. Grant Program Managers, Program Supervisors, accounting personnel, school personnel and any other individuals responsible for expending Grant Funds are held responsible for compliance with *Uniform Grant Guidance* and must understand that severe penalties and funding disallowances could result from instances of non-compliance.

#### CONTROL ACTIVITIES OVER ALLOWABLE/UNALLOWABLE COST

Each Program Supervisor shall collaborate with his/her staff department and school principals to gather information to be used in the budget process. The Program Supervisor shall notify the Grants Management Coordinator of any employees whose salaries are to be funded by grants. The Grants Management Coordinator shall communicate with the Payroll Accountant to get salary information and the retirement rates to be used to complete the payroll items on the budgets. The Payroll Accountant shall set up salary related information in the payroll system in accordance with the School Board salary schedule and what is allowed for in the grant budget. Program budgets shall be entered and completed mainly by the Program Supervisors and the Grants Management Coordinator completes the budgets on the smaller grants (LA4 and Preschool 8g). The Superintendent shall approve all grant applications and budgets and

complete the submission. When a grant has been approved in eGrants, the Program Supervisor and the Grants Management Coordinator shall be notified by email. The Grants Management Coordinator receives copies of all approved program budgets, which either come from the eGrants website or directly from the program supervisor.

All purchases to be paid with grants must be initiated by a purchase requisition (with the exception of certain contracted services). The Program Director shall review all purchase requisitions to determine if costs are allowable. The purchase requisition must be signed for approval by the Program Supervisor before the purchase can be made. The purchase requisition shall then be forwarded to the Grants Management Coordinator to be coded, or if already coded, the Grants Management Coordinator shall review the code for accuracy. If a purchase requisition is sent to Grants Management without the Program Supervisor's signature of approval and/or without specifying which fund that the purchase is to be charged to, then it shall be sent to the Program Supervisor. The majority of coding for grant expenses is done by the Grants Management Coordinator. The Special Education Department does the majority of the coding for Special Education related grants which shall be reviewed by the Grants Management Coordinator for accuracy. All out of parish travel paid with grants shall be reviewed and coded by the General Ledger Accountant. The General Ledger Accountant shall work with the Grants Management Coordinator for any coding issues. The Business Manager shall review and approve all purchase requisitions before forwarding to the Purchasing Manager or Accounts Payable for further processing.

Any purchase requisitions that are completed for hotel or conference registration shall be sent to Accounts Payable for further processing. All other purchase requisitions shall be sent to the Purchasing Manager. All stipend pay documentations, timesheets for extra pay, and travel/mileage reimbursement support, *etc.* must be signed by the Program Supervisor, principal (if applicable) before it is sent to Grants Management Coordinator to be reviewed and coded (if not already coded). The support shall then be sent to the Business Manager for final approval. Payroll related items including stipend pay documentation and timesheets for extra pay shall be sent to the Payroll Accountant to be entered into the system and processed. The Payroll Accountant shall collaborate with the Grants Management Coordinator for any questions concerning coding. The Grants Management Coordinator shall perform periodic reviews of grant expenses in the general ledger for expenses that may be improperly coded. For each grant, the Grants Management Coordinator shall maintain and update a budget to actual spreadsheet each time a reimbursement request is done. The spreadsheet shows the total amount that has been requested and the remaining balance for each line item/object code. The spreadsheet shall be reviewed to determine that expenses appear reasonable and it is also use to determine when budget revisions are needed.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.

## DONATIONS AND GIFTS

No public servant shall solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, anything of economic value as a gift or gratuity from any person or from any officer, director, agent, or employee of such person, if such public servant knows or reasonably should know that such person:

1. Has or is seeking to obtain contractual or other business or financial relationships with the public servant's agency, or
2. Is seeking, for compensation, to influence the passage or defeat of legislation by the public servant's agency.

No public employee shall solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, anything of economic value as a gift or gratuity from any person or from any officer, director, agent, or employee of such person, if such public employee knows or reasonably should know that such person:

1. Conducts operations or activities which are regulated by the public employee's agency.
2. Has substantial economic interests which may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the public employee's official duty.

## DONATIONS

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall encourage community groups, organizations, and individuals to assist the School Board in providing material and financial resources to the School Board or schools which otherwise might not be available.

The School Board may accept and administer any donation that may be made to it for educational or literary purposes and shall enumerate details of the contents of such donations in a document made publicly available on its website. If accepted, the School Board shall administer the property entrusted to them in conformity with the directives contained in the act of donation and for that purpose the School Board shall be vested with all the necessary powers of administration. The School Board reserves the right, however, to examine the provisions of any and all prospective donations to a school, the School Board, or a School Board-related entity to ascertain the propriety of the donation.

Unrestricted donations may be accepted by the School Board, or any school, subject to approval guidelines of the School Board. Items donated to schools may be retained by the receiving school under the ownership of the Morehouse Parish School Board. The School Board shall retain the discretion to remove, repair, or modify any item which it considers obsolete, worn-out, or unsafe. Principals shall be required to keep a permanent record of donations received by the school from community groups, organizations, or

individuals, exclusive of funds raised by the school or funds provided by students for special activities, such as field trips.

GIFTS AND AWARDS

School funds shall not be used to provide any form of gift to an employee, and no employee shall accept such gift, except that which is dedicated for that specific purpose. No cash gifts shall be given to School Board employees, whether in appreciation, as a "bonus," or for any other reason. For purposes of this policy, gift certificates for merchandise shall be considered cash and shall not be given as a gift. This includes payment from athletic booster clubs or other organizations to coaches, sponsors, or employees.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:381, 17:382, 17:383, 42:1115, 42:1123.



## ADMISSIONS AND GATE RECEIPTS

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall establish and maintain uniform procedures for the handling and accounting of admission fees charged for all school events, such as athletics or entertainment, whether such is assessed in advance or upon entering. All such fees shall be controlled through the use of pre-numbered tickets. The price of tickets shall be determined and set by each school.

Uniform procedures outlined in the School Board's *Activities Accounts Policy Manual* shall be followed by all schools where ticket or admission sales are conducted.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.

## LEASE OF SCHOOL LANDS

The Morehouse Parish School Board may execute a lease of any of its school land in accordance with the requirements of state law. Leases for the production and removal of minerals granted by or on behalf of the School Board shall provide for a minimum of royalties of minerals produced and saved, as required by state law or the School Board. All mineral leases shall be advertised, received, opened and accepted/rejected by the School Board or the State Mineral Board on behalf of the School Board. The School Board or State Mineral Board may reject any and all bids that may be submitted or may lease a lesser quantity of property than advertised and withdraw the rest.

Leases for the purposes of trapping, grazing, hunting, agriculture/farming or any other legitimate purposes other than for removal of oil, gas, or other minerals, may be executed on such terms and conditions as are in the best interest of the School Board and in compliance with state law. Such leases shall be awarded only after formal advertisement for and receipt of bids as set forth by state law.

The School Board shall require all appropriate leases, as determined by the School Board's legal adviser, to include the purchase of appropriate liability insurance by the individual or organization leasing the property, which shall hold the School Board free from any liability that may result directly or indirectly from the leased property's usage.

### GEOPHYSICAL OR SEISMIC SURVEY PERMITS

The School Board may grant permission for geophysical or seismic surveys to be conducted on School Board property. For the privilege of conducting seismograph exploration over and across lands owned by the School Board, application shall be submitted to the School Board seeking permission to conduct surveys. If said application is approved by the School Board, the applicant shall be permitted to conduct its seismographic operations in accordance with terms and conditions set forth in the permit agreement for a minimum fee as set by the School Board. All applications shall contain pertinent information to adequately evaluate the proposed survey.

Upon completion of any survey conducted, the surveyor shall be responsible for plugging and properly abandoning any drilled holes in accordance with state guidelines.

### RIGHTS-OF-WAY

The School Board may grant rights-of-way on school lands upon formal written request. No application for a right-of-way shall be considered unless certificate of publication of due notice is on file in the office of the School Board, showing advertisement of the pending application has been made two times within ten (10) calendar days in the official journal of the system wherein the school lands are situated. A fee may be charged for such privilege.

SIXTEENTH SECTION LANDS

Leasing of Sixteenth Section lands shall be handled as follows:

1. The School Board, upon determining to lease any Sixteenth Section lands, shall publish an advertisement in the official journal of the school district where the land is located setting forth a description of the land to be leased, the time when bids will be received, and a short summary of the terms, conditions, and purposes of the lease to be executed. If the lands are situated in two (2) or more parishes, the advertisement shall appear in the official journals of all parishes in which the lands are located. The advertisement shall be published for a period of not less than fifteen (15) calendar days and at least once a week during three (3) consecutive weeks. The School Board may also send notices to those whom it may think would be interested in submitting bids for the leases.
2. Bids shall be enclosed and sealed in a self-addressed return envelope and shall be forwarded to the School Board at its domiciled address through the United States mail. Bids may also be delivered electronically or by hand.
3. Each bid for hunting, trapping, grazing or agricultural/farming purposes shall be accompanied by a payment in a sum equal to one year's rental or lease amount; bids for any other purpose shall follow state law and require a payment in a sum equal to 10% of one year's rental or lease amount. Such payment shall be in cash or by certified check, cashier's check, teller's check, or an official check issued by a bank, made payable to the Morehouse Parish School Board.
4. *Acceptance or Rejection of Bids Handled Through the State Mineral Board*  
  
When through adoption of the appropriate resolution, the School Board authorizes and directs the State Mineral Board to handle the leasing of Section 16 lands, the Mineral Board may reject any and all bids, or may lease a lesser quantity of property than advertised and withdraw the rest.
5. All funds realized by the Morehouse Parish School Board from the lease of sixteenth-section lands shall be credited to the general school funds of the School Board.

LEASES

The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall maintain pertinent administrative regulations and procedures for managing the process for advertising and leasing School Board owned lands in keeping with provisions stipulated in this policy.

The Superintendent and/or his/her representative shall be authorized to negotiate all leases, subject to approval of the School Board. Leases shall generally be for a five (5)

year period, unless otherwise stipulated at time of advertisement, or subsequently negotiated and approved by the School Board and lessee. All leases shall be publicly bid at the expiration of the lease. For sixteenth-section lands the minimum bid considered shall be \$5.00 per acre or \$500.00, whichever is greater. All such leases shall be limited to whole sections or identifiable portions thereof.

The lessee shall be required to provide the School Board with a certificate of insurance showing property and/or general liability coverage on such limits as set by the School Board and naming the Morehouse Parish School Board as an additional insured. Said certificate shall be provided to the School Board at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the beginning date of the lease, or at the time of the execution of the original lease.

Ref: Constitution of Louisiana, Art. VII, Sec. 4(c); Art IX, Sec. 4(b); La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:87, 17:87.1, 17:87.2, 17:87.3, 17:87.8, 30:121, 30:127, 30:151, 30:152, 30:153, 41:1211, 41:1212, 41:1213, 41:1214, 41:1215, 41:1215.1, 41:1215.2, 41:1216, 41:1217, 41:1218, 41:1219, 41:1220, 41:1221, 41:1222, 41:1223, 41:1224.

## SALE OF SURPLUS EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Supplies, appliances, and equipment no longer usable for the purpose for which it was acquired or built may be declared surplus by the Superintendent upon notification by the department to which the merchandise or equipment has been assigned. Any such equipment, supplies or appliances shall then be inspected to determine if they are usable or should be declared surplus.

Following a declaration by the School Board that moveable property is no longer needed and is therefore *surplus*, the property may be sold or disposed of by utilizing any of the following procedures: sealed bids, sale by a licensed auctioneer, disposal through state surplus, internet auction or inter-governmental agreement under the *local services law* (La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §33:1324-1325). A minimum fair value price shall be established for each item and the bid price shall start at that point for items considered worthy. Said bids shall be opened publicly and disposed of in a prudent, businesslike manner. The School Board shall reserve the right to accept or reject any and all bids.

Unless the School Board directs otherwise, the proceeds of the sale shall be payable to the Morehouse Parish School Board and shall be credited to the general school fund of the School Board.

Items declared surplus or unfit for further use by the School Board shall be stored at the school/department where assigned until the merchandise or equipment is properly sold or other plans for disposition are approved by the Superintendent.

The sale of surplus merchandise or equipment shall be final, on the "as is" or "where is" basis and shall carry no warranties whatsoever. If not sold, these items shall be sold as junk, or if no salvage value can be realized, destroyed in the most economical manner possible.

### COMPUTING DEVICES

When the School Board determines that an individual computing device used by a student or students has reached the end of its typical life cycle, is no longer needed for school purposes, and will be removed from classroom use, and that the best interest of the public school system would be served by the private sale of such device due to the cost of auctioning the device or recycling it or due to other factors, the School Board may sell the device to a student enrolled in a school in the school system or to the parent, tutor, or legal guardian of such a student.

The sale price for the device shall be reasonably equivalent to the value of the device, taking into consideration its typical life cycle, current condition, and costs of other methods of alienation or disposal.

All such sales shall be in accordance with School Board policies, and sale prices shall be approved by appropriate School Board administrative personnel prior to sale. Such sales shall apply only to individual computing devices used for classwork by students and shall not apply to other computer equipment or related equipment such as routers, switches, or servers.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:87.6, 33:1324, 33:1325, 38:2320, 49:125.

## SALE OF BUILDINGS AND LANDS

Whenever the Morehouse Parish School Board determines that any school lands or other immovable property under its control are no longer needed for school purposes and that the best interest of the School Board would be served by the sale of such lands, the School Board shall have authority to dispose of such lands at public auction, under sealed bids, or by a licensed real estate broker.

The School Board may obtain appraisals from up to three (3) Louisiana state-licensed commercial real estate appraisers to ascertain the current value of the property.

The appraisals shall be obtained within six (6) months prior to conducting the sale of the property.

### STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Real estate that has been declared as no longer needed for public school purposes shall be disposed of as outlined below:

1. Sale Utilizing Public Auction or Sealed Bids
  - A. At least one (1) real estate appraisal shall be obtained reflecting the fair market value.
  - B. Local governmental authorities shall be notified that such property is no longer needed for school purposes and invited to submit a proposal if there is a need for such property.
  - C. Advertisement for sealed bids shall be published in the School Board's official journal on at least three (3) separate days for at least thirty (30) days prior to the date the land is to be offered for sale, or as otherwise provided for in state law.
  - D. Upon receipt and opening of bids at the time designated, all bids shall be considered by the School Board and the property sold to the highest bidder in accordance with such terms and conditions as the School Board shall determine. The School Board shall reserve the right to reject any and all bids.
    - 1) The first time the School Board offers a particular property for sale, the minimum bid shall be eighty-five percent (85%) of the appraised value of the property.
    - 2) If the School Board fails to sell the property because the maximum bid received was not equal to or greater than the minimum bid in item

D 1) above, the School Board may make a second effort to sell the property. The minimum bid for a second effort to sell the same property shall be eighty percent (80%) of the appraised value.

- 3) If the School Board has twice failed to sell property because the maximum bid received was not equal to or greater than the minimum bid provided above, there shall be no minimum bid at the third effort to sell the property, and the School Board may sell the property to the highest bidder.

## 2. Sale of School Board Property Utilizing Real Estate Broker

- A. In lieu of public auction or sealed bids, and when it is in the best interest of the School Board, the School Board may contract for the services of a licensed real estate broker to conduct the sale of the property. The licensed commercial real estate broker shall be selected utilizing a request for quotes/qualifications process based on the following minimum qualifications:
  - Licensed within the State of Louisiana;
  - Ability to provide substantial real estate-related analytical data and financial information; and
  - Well-established local and regional business relationships and partnerships to promote effective business solutions.
- B. The term of the contract shall not exceed six (6) months. A minimum sale price and a time period within which the sale is to occur shall be specified by the School Board as conditions of the contract. Payment to the real estate broker for conducting the sale shall not exceed five percent (5%) of the sale price and shall be contingent upon completion of the sale in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract. The School Board shall have the right to cancel the contract at any time for any reason prior to the sale and conduct the sale as otherwise provided by law.
- C. No member or immediate family, as defined in La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §42:1102, of the School Board or legislature shall perform the services of appraiser or real estate broker authorized by this Section.

The deed evidencing act of sale executed by the President of the School Board shall be full and complete evidence of the sale, shall convey a good and valid title to the property sold, and shall have the force and effect of a notarial act.

## SIXTEENTH SECTION LANDS



**FILE: DFK**  
**Cf: DFI, DFJ**

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall conduct all elections to authorize the sale of sixteenth section land and the funds realized from the sale of such land, after deduction for necessary expenses connected with such elections, shall be promptly forwarded to the state auditor. These funds shall be credited to the general school funds of the School Board.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:87, 17:87.6, 41:640, 41:891, 41:892.

## DEPOSITORY OF FUNDS

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall contract on an annual basis or longer with a depository to provide the most efficient and otherwise desirable services for the School Board and school district. Selection of the official depository shall be in accordance with statutory provisions. All funds of the School Board shall be deposited to the account(s) of the School Board in the official depository.

All monies retained in school buildings shall be safeguarded in secure areas at all times. However, the School Board shall assume no responsibility for funds lost in a school. The School Board requires that school funds be deposited on a daily basis, whenever possible.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:95, 39:1211, 39:1212.

## BONDED EMPLOYEES

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall require all persons authorized to sign checks or warrants drawn against the school funds to furnish a surety bond in an amount to be determined by the School Board, but which shall be not less than fifteen thousand dollars, for the faithful performance of their duties.

The Superintendent, as School Board Treasurer, shall give an indemnity bond in such sum as may be determined by the School Board, made in favor of the governor or his/her successors in office and the School Board, and the School Board shall pay the premium of said bond.

All bonds purchased by the School Board made in favor of the School Board shall include coverage for faithful performance of duties as well as coverage against loss sustained by the School Board through any fraudulent or dishonest act committed by any of the bonded employees. All bonds purchased by the School Board shall be from an insurance company licensed to do business in Louisiana.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:95, 17:97.

## ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING

The Morehouse Parish School Board delegates to the Superintendent or his/her designee, the responsibility for accounting for all School Board and school funds, and for maintaining complete, accurate, and detailed records of all financial transactions in the school district. These records shall be in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, as prescribed, and approved regulations of the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), and/or as required or requested by the Morehouse Parish School Board.

Said accounts and fiscal records shall be available during normal business hours for inspection by the public.

### SCHOOL BOARD FUNDS

The School Board shall require the Superintendent, through the Business Office, to provide the necessary guidance and direction for the administrative implementation, review, analysis, reporting, and modification of all budgeted activities as approved by the School Board. All administrative regulations and procedures developed and maintained governing the fiscal responsibility of the School Board and its personnel and resources shall be designed to promote efficient management and sound fiscal accountability at every level of the School Board.

All School Board employees charged with receipt, handling, and/or disbursement of any School Board funds shall abide strictly by state and federal law, policies of the School Board, and administrative regulations and procedures developed by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

### SCHOOL FUNDS

The School Board shall require that uniform procedures be applied throughout the school district to assure the proper accounting for, and expenditure of, all monies under the control of each school. Pertinent regulations and procedures, as outlined in the School Board's handbook, *Activity Accounts Policy Manual* shall be maintained by the Superintendent and his/her staff. Such funds shall be subject to regular audit by appropriate Business Office personnel or as may otherwise be provided.

Adherence to and implementation of state law and all administrative regulations and procedures, as may be established by the Superintendent, shall be the responsibility of each school principal or his/her designee.

The School Board shall receive periodic reports from the Superintendent of all income, expenditures, balances in the schools' various accounts, and such other data as the School Board may prescribe, in addition to regular financial reports. In every way possible, the School Board shall provide financial assistance relative to student activity

programs within each school.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:59, 17:196, 17:414.3, 24:515, 39:1301, 39:1302, 39:1303, 39:1304, 39:1305, 39:1306, 39:1307,, 39:1308, 39:1309, 39:1310, 39:1311, 39:1312, 39:1313, 39:1314; Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators, Bulletin 741, Louisiana Accounting and Uniform Governmental Handbook, Bulletin 1929, Louisiana Department of Education.

## FINANCIAL REPORTS AND STATEMENTS

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall make all reports required by the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) and/or state law relative to the financial operation of the School Board.

The School Board shall require that all financial reports and statements be prepared completely and accurately and that said reports and statements be submitted to designated officials on or before specified due dates.

The Superintendent shall provide the School Board with periodic financial statements, upon request. Said reports shall reflect compilation of all school financial reports plus system-wide budgetary data as prepared by the Superintendent or his/her designees, as well as any other financial information requested.

Principals shall be required to provide the Superintendent or his/her designee with all required financial reports and necessary documentation he/she may prescribe. These reports shall be presented by the dates established by the Superintendent.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:88, 17:196.

## INVENTORIES

### CAPITAL ASSETS

The Morehouse Parish School Board directs the Superintendent to maintain a current itemized list of all land, buildings, improvements other than buildings, equipment, and any other fixed assets which were purchased or otherwise acquired, for which the School Board is accountable.

The property control system shall include a list for reporting purposes of all fixed assets with a value of \$5,000 or more in the school district including all items purchased or donated to the School Board. The list shall include information as to the date of purchase, the initial cost and the disposition, if any, the purpose of such disposition, and the recipient of the property or equipment disposed of. In the case of theft of an asset, a police report should be obtained immediately, and the Superintendent or his/her designee should also be immediately notified of the theft.

For accountability and internal control purposes, an inventory of equipment and other items costing \$1,000 or more shall also be inventoried, tagged, and tracked by the School Board. This may include items such as computers, cameras, projectors, televisions, band equipment, appliances (e.g. stoves or refrigerators), and furniture.

### Physical Inventory

In order to maintain an accurate account of Morehouse Parish School Board possessions, a physical inventory of all possessions shall be taken at the building level at least annually, but may be more frequent as needed. Principals or their designees are the designated custodians of all possessions at the school level and shall be ultimately responsible for the safeguarding and record maintenance of all assets/equipment in their schools. However, any employee who has physical custody of School Board assets shall be personally responsible for safeguarding the assets, i.e., each teacher shall be responsible for his/her classroom, the librarian for the assets in the library, the band director for the assets in the band department, etc.

Building level administrators shall be responsible for ensuring that annual inventories are taken and that the Finance Department is notified of any changes that need to be made to their respective inventory records or reported as required. The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall maintain pertinent procedures for maintaining inventory and tracking records, including, identifying, appraising, tagging, and removing fixed assets from any inventory records.

A full fixed asset inventory shall be performed every two (2) years by the Business Office.

### GRANT ASSETS

Fixed assets purchased by federal, state, or local grants should be placed in operation immediately. If there is a problem in getting the asset in operation, the Superintendent

should be notified immediately.

### INTANGIBLE ASSETS

An *intangible asset* shall be considered an asset with an initial life that extends beyond a single reporting period, lacks physical substance, and is nonfinancial in nature. Intangible assets shall include easements, water rights, timber rights, patents, trademarks, and computer software which can be purchased or licensed or internally generated.

An intangible asset should only be recognized if it is identifiable. An asset is identifiable if it is separable, i.e., the asset is capable of being separated and sold, transferred, licensed, etc., or if the asset arises from contractual or other legal rights, regardless of whether rights are separable.

Intangible assets shall be amortized over their useful lives. The useful life of an intangible asset that arises from contractual or legal rights should not exceed the legal term of the rights. Renewal periods should be considered in determining the useful life if there is evidence that renewal will be sought and achieved and the cost of the renewal is nominal in relation to the level of service capacity expected to be obtained through the renewal. An intangible asset is not amortized if the asset has an indefinite useful life. An intangible asset should be considered to have an indefinite useful life if there are no legal, contractual, regulatory, technological, or other factors that limit the useful life of the asset. For example, a permanent right-of-way easement would have an indefinite useful life.

Rules for accounting, calculating the initial value and depreciation of the asset shall be in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards.

For accountability and internal control purposes, an inventory of intangible assets shall be kept for any asset with a value of \$100,000 or more.

### TEXTBOOK INVENTORIES

Each school shall keep an inventory record of all textbooks on hand at the beginning of the session, as well as records of those textbooks added, worn out, and in need of replacement. Textbook records should be kept on file for a minimum of three (3) years. All lost or damaged books must be paid for by the student to which the books have been assigned. Money received by a principal for lost or damaged books must be recorded and deposited into the school account.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 24:515; Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators, Bulletin 741, Louisiana Accounting and Uniform Governmental Handbook, Bulletin 1929, Louisiana Department of Education.



## AUDITS

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall require all financial records and accounts, including business transactions, of the School Board and each school to be audited in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. The audit of selected accounts shall be conducted by internal auditors or contracted personnel in conformance with prescribed standards and legal requirements. Said audits, upon completion, shall be presented to the School Board for examination.

Other financial audits may also be made of appropriate accounts upon the transfer, resignation, or dismissal of personnel responsible for receiving and disbursing school funds, or whenever, in the opinion of the School Board, a financial audit is deemed advisable. The School Board's internal auditors, a certified public accountant, or a reputable accounting firm shall conduct such audits as necessary.

All audits shall be conducted and filed in accordance with statutory provisions. Should any error or discrepancies be found as a result of any audit, any personnel found responsible may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### ANNUAL AUDIT

Within six (6) months of the close of the fiscal year, the School Board shall require an annual examination of all financial statements, financial accountability, and review of all books and accounts of the School Board. Such a complete examination shall be conducted by a licensed certified public accountant(s), who has been engaged by the School Board and such examination shall be performed in accordance with generally accepted governmental auditing standards and the *Louisiana Governmental Audit Guide*. The accountant shall have access to and assistance privileges of all accounts, records, files, and any other forms of recordation of the School Board. However, the accountant shall comply with any and all restrictions imposed by law on documents, data, or information deemed confidential by law furnished to him/her during the examination.

Within thirty (30) days of notice of the approval and acceptance by the legislative auditor each year, the School Board shall post the most recent annual independent audit on its website.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:88, 17:89, 17:196, 24:513, 24:514, 24:515.

## RECORDS RETENTION

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall exercise diligence and care in preserving all records used or retained for use in the operation and management of the school district, including, but not limited to, financial records, supporting documents, statistical records and all other records pertinent to accounting and reporting for sources and uses of funds. Records shall be retained in accordance with a *Records Retention Schedule* developed by the Superintendent or his/her designee and approved by the State Archivist.

<b>RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE</b>	<b>3 years</b>	<b>6 Years</b>	<b>Permanent</b>
Accounts payable and receivable		Y	
Annual budget reports		Y	
Auto/mileage reports/Travel expense		Y	
Bank statements/Cancelled checks		Y	
Correspondence (regular and e-mail):			
<i>general or routine</i>	Y		
<i>legal and important matters</i>			Y
Deeds, mortgages, and bills of sale			Y
Deposit receipts		Y	
Financial audit reports		Y	
Financial statements		Y	
Fixed assets/Inventory records		Y	
Insurance policies (expired)	Y		
Insurance policies (current)			Y
Patient records		Y	
Payroll records and summaries		Y	
Personnel files (after separation)		Y	
Property records			Y
Purchase orders		Y	
State/Local contracts		Y	
Tax returns and related documents			Y
Time sheets	Y		

Other time restrictions may apply to certain records.

A microphotographic process or other legal form of archival recordkeeping may be utilized and the resulting microform retained for storage in lieu of the original itself unless specifically prohibited by law.

Records should not be destroyed when there is pending litigation or until the appropriate

state or federal audits have been conducted. The retention of public records at individual schools shall be in accordance with the Louisiana Public Records law and School Board policies and other state and federal regulations. Destruction or disposal shall be only done by authorized personnel. When records are removed or disposed of in a school setting, a brief memo shall be inserted in the records file containing the name and position of the person performing the removal or destruction, the date, and a brief description of the types of records destroyed or removed.

Any off-site storage of records or official documentation shall be properly labeled for easy reference, and protected for security.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:196, 39:1597, 39:1598, 39:1626, 39:1627, 44:36, 44:411.

## PRESERVATION OF SCHOOL BOARD RECORDS DUE TO LEGAL ACTION

The Morehouse Parish School Board recognizes that circumstances occur where the normal and routine retention, disposal, and/or destruction of records must be suspended according to federal and State requirements and Morehouse Parish School Board policy. Present and future records that are involved in litigation, or reasonably anticipated in foreseeable legal action, shall be preserved until the Superintendent releases the hold on such records. Such preservation of records shall apply to all School Board records owned or otherwise controlled by the School Board and all faculty, staff, administrators, School Board members, contractors or anyone else having access to School Board technology resources. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall be authorized to implement the necessary procedures for governing and monitoring the preservation of School Board records due to legal action being taken or for potential legal action.

### DEFINITIONS

Records – The term *records* shall include all records, whether in electronic or paper form, created, received, or maintained in the transaction of School Board business. Such records may include, but are not limited to, paper records and electronic records transferred and/or stored by or on behalf of the School Board using the School Board's technology resources. Electronic records may exist in a wide variety of formats, including, without limitation, text documents, spreadsheets, presentations, HTML documents, digital images, email messages, databases, voicemails and other digital recordings.

Technology Resources – The term *technology resources* shall mean telecommunications equipment, transmission devices, electronic video and audio equipment, computers, data processing or storage systems, storage media, computer systems, servers, networks, programs, and/or computer-driven or web accessible software that is owned or operated by the School Board.

Preservation of Records – The term *preservation of records* shall mean an order or notice to cease destruction or disposal and to preserve all records pertaining to the nature or subject of the preservation (to place a "hold" on such record).

### PRESERVATION OF RECORDS

Notwithstanding School Board policies or administrative regulations or procedures to the contrary, School Board records, whether in paper or electronic form, pertaining to any pending or anticipated legal claim against the School Board shall be preserved and maintained until the legal claim, whether litigation or other legal proceeding, is finally concluded. It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent, or his/her designee(s), to ensure that appropriate holds on any relevant records are timely implemented and monitored and that affected School Board personnel are given timely notice of their responsibility to preserve School Board records pertaining to any pending or anticipated

legal claim until the legal proceeding is finally concluded. The procedures shall also provide for the preservation and maintenance of such records.

Generally, the preservation obligations do not extend to back-up tapes or other media which are maintained solely for disaster recovery. In the event that the Superintendent determines that relevant electronic records can only be obtained via backup tapes or other media maintained for disaster recovery, the School Board may undertake, if reasonable to do so, efforts to extract the pertinent records and separately maintain them until conclusion of the legal proceeding.

The Superintendent shall determine and communicate to affected School Board personnel when a preservation order may be lifted and records are no longer need to be on hold pursuant to the preservation order.

#### VIOLATIONS

Violations of this policy and any administrative regulations and procedures implemented pursuant to this policy shall subject personnel to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal in accordance with applicable federal and state law and School Board policy.

Ref: Fed. Rules Civ. Proc., Rule 34, Rule 37; La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.

## EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS

In accordance with statutory provisions, the Morehouse Parish School Board shall direct the Superintendent to serve as treasurer for the School Board, who shall receive, hold in custody, and expend all funds as directed by the School Board in conformance with statutory accounting and budgetary requirements. The Superintendent shall also maintain pertinent administrative regulations and procedures to assure the proper expending of School Board funds.

No expenditure of funds shall be made where the expenditure would be more than funds available, unless approved by the School Board.

### SCHOOL BOARD FUNDS

Whenever an expenditure is brought before the School Board that represents a potential expenditure of funds not previously included in a budget, the Superintendent shall be required to advise the School Board in writing as to the specific budget from which the expenditure will be paid, and the new projected ending balance for the budget affected.

### SCHOOL FUNDS

The principal of a school shall receive, hold in custody, and expend all funds, in accordance with proper administrative procedures as maintained by the Superintendent and/or his/her designee, of all activities of the school for which the principal is responsible. All purchases by the schools shall be made or approved by the principal or by a person authorized in writing by the principal.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:97; 39:1301, 39:1302, 39:1303, 39:1304, 39:1305, 39:1306, 39:1307, 39:1308, 39:1309, 39:1310, 39:1311, 39:1312, 39:1313, 39:1314.

## AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES

### CHECKS

The Morehouse Parish School Board, in accordance with state law, shall require the President and Superintendent, as secretary-treasurer, to sign any and all checks issued in payment of expenditures. The School Board authorizes the use of a facsimile signature device for those persons designated to sign checks. Appropriate procedures shall be maintained to assure proper issuance of all checks. The Superintendent's designee shall be authorized to sign checks in the absence of the Superintendent when necessary.

### CONTRACTS, LEASES

All contracts, leases, and other such documents obligating the School Board or school district shall be signed by the School Board President or in his/her absence, the Vice-President and/or the Superintendent when authorized, except when someone else is specifically designated by the School Board.

Any person purporting to enter into any contract on behalf of the Morehouse School Board, school district, or any school under the School Board's jurisdiction, including but not limited to contracts with vendors or contracts of membership in any private or quasi-public entity, shall do so in compliance with policies adopted by the School Board and administrative procedures in effect at the time the contract is executed. Personal services contracts, leases, maintenance contracts, and other such agreements (excluding employee contracts, work order type contracts, and normal purchases) greater than \$10,000 shall be signed by the School Board President. Personal services contracts, leases, maintenance contracts, and other such agreements (excluding employee contracts, work order type contracts, and normal purchases) of \$10,000 or less may be signed by the Superintendent.

### FEDERAL AND STATE GRANTS, FUNDS OR PROGRAMS

Unless otherwise specified in the federal or state grant or contract, the Superintendent or designee shall be authorized to sign necessary assurances, compliance, and accountability documents on behalf of the Morehouse School Board. Before signing, the Superintendent or designee shall verify that the assurances and documents are accurate. All documents shall be made available to the School Board upon request.

### RIGHT OF WAY AGREEMENTS

Incidental right-of-way agreements may be approved and signed by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

### BILLS, INVOICES, STATEMENTS

The Morehouse School Board directs that only authorized school employees shall sign bills, invoices, or statements in accordance with pertinent accounting procedures.

#### TEACHER CONTRACTS

The Superintendent shall sign each teacher contract.

#### SCHOOL CHECKING ACCOUNTS

The School Board authorizes principals, with the approval of the Superintendent, to open bank accounts for their schools and related clubs and organizations. The use of checking accounts at schools shall be in accordance with appropriate accounting regulations and procedures maintained by the Superintendent or his/her designee and outlined by *the School Activity Accounts Manual*.

The Superintendent shall be given authority to make changes on school checking accounts as each school principal or school administrator changes, or at any other time deemed necessary, without the necessity of any additional resolution being adopted by the School Board. Appropriate School Board personnel shall monitor the appropriateness of each checking account and shall be authorized to recommend to the Superintendent the closure of any account deemed necessary.

#### ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES

To the extent allowed by the Louisiana Uniform Electronic Transactions Act or other applicable law, individuals authorized to sign documents on behalf of the School Board or school district may sign those documents electronically. Unlike facsimile signatures, which are designed to be used by persons other than the individual whose signature is needed, an electronic signature is intended to be used only by the individual signing the document in situations where the document is electronic or it is inconvenient to sign a document manually. Only the individual whose signature is being used or a person who has been given explicit permission by that individual to use the individual's signature on a particular document may sign a document with an electronic signature.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§ 9:2601, 9:2602, 9:2603, 9:2603.1, 9:2604, 9:2605, 9:2607, 9:2609, 9:2611, 9:2618, 17:81, 17:83, 17:97; 17:414.3; Louisiana Attorney General Opinion Nos. 91-191, 92-373.



## PAYROLL PROCEDURES

Salaries for all personnel shall be paid according to the salary schedule established by and approved by the Morehouse Parish School Board.

### PAYDAY SCHEDULES

All regular employees of the Morehouse Parish School Board who are employed for nine (9), ten (10), or eleven (11) months shall be paid on a monthly basis, with checks distributed as near to the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month as possible. Twelve (12) month employees shall have the option of being paid on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. Those persons being paid on a semi-monthly basis shall be paid as near to the 14<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of each month as possible.

All new nine (9) month personnel reporting into the payroll for the first time shall receive their pay in twelve (12) monthly installments, with the first installment to be made at the end of September and continuing each month thereafter.

All employees shall receive payment through direct deposit and shall have their payment credited directly to their bank accounts on the scheduled payday. In the event that the employee does not have a bank account, the payment shall be mailed at least two (2) days prior to the payday. It is the employee's responsibility to give a voided check or other deposit information to the Business Office and to immediately notify the payroll department in person with proper identification of any changes in account status. Only checking accounts from approved financial institutions shall be accepted for direct deposit.

All payroll changes concerning salary deductions for federal taxes, local taxes, group insurance and other miscellaneous payroll deductions shall be submitted to Business Office at least ten (10) working days prior to the last working day of the month. Otherwise, such changes shall not be effective until the following month.

Changes in taxes or payroll deductions shall be submitted on the appropriate form and received by the Business Office to change the amount being deducted. Cancellations in payroll deductions shall only be by written notification from and signed by the employee. Changes sent directly to insurance companies shall not be effective until the change notification is received by the Business Office.

No payment shall be made for any regular or substitute employee until the personnel department receives the minimum information of: name, address, and social security number. If no W-4 form is received for federal and local taxes, the taxes to be withheld shall be at the single rate with no dependents.

Checks for Other than Salary

Stipends, summer school pay, overtime, travel reimbursements, and any other pay outside of normal salaries shall be issued by the next scheduled pay day.

Lost Checks/Incorrect Deposit Instructions

If a check was lost as a result of the employee failing to notify the business office of a change of address, incorrect data provided to the payroll department by the employee, or any other employee negligence, or lost by a postal system, the employee shall receive a replacement check within the next five (5) working days. If there was an administrative error or direct deposit comes back because of an administrative error, the employee shall have the error corrected as soon as possible.

TEACHERS SEPARATING

Teachers separating from the Morehouse Parish School Board during the school year shall receive payment in full for their services on or before the next regular payday or no later than fifteen (15) calendar days following the date of termination, whichever occurs first.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 23:631.

## SALARY DEDUCTIONS

The Morehouse Parish School Board maintains that salary deductions which are considered statutory, including federal income tax, state income tax, retirement, or garnishments by court order, shall be deducted in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Any voluntary deductions desired by employees may be authorized by the School Board, when such action is determined to be in the best interest of the school system. The School Board shall not assume any liability for compliance with governing requirements and regulations.

The following voluntary deductions shall be approved by the School Board:

1. Membership dues in recognized professional associations. Dues shall be deducted only upon receipt of an authorization signed by the individual employee.
2. Deductions for employee contributions to the school system's hospitalization and life insurance program and any other insurance or tax-sheltered annuity programs which are or may be approved by the School Board.
3. United Givers Fund.
4. Employee Credit Union.

The Morehouse School Board shall only be responsible for making approved salary deductions as requested in writing by any employee of the School Board. Under no circumstances shall special arrangements be made as to the commencement or transaction of salary deductions.

No new payroll deductions, beyond those listed above, shall be authorized until there is a demonstrated need by employees and approval has been given by the School Board. All future insurance coverages to be considered by the School Board that may be offered to employees must have a minimum participation of 35% of the employees before payroll deductions shall be granted.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:438, 17:1184, 17:1202; 17:1315.

## PAYMENT FOR INDEPENDENT SERVICES

### SCHOOL-BASED PAYMENTS TO INDIVIDUALS FOR SERVICES

The Morehouse Parish School Board recognizes the need to hire employees and other individuals to assist with school functions and events during and after school, such as athletic contests, craft shows, nighttime pageants, etc. Any school that agrees to pay teachers or any other school system employee for any school event or school-related activity, the payment for services rendered shall be handled through the School Board's regular payroll.

No payment for services or works performed by Morehouse Parish School Board employees shall be made through school activity funds, whether by cash or check. The only exception allowing the school to make payment shall be for game officials and law enforcement personnel serving a security function at events at the school. Payments for these services shall be made in accordance with procedures established by the Superintendent and staff.

To comply with federal and state earned income reporting requirements, all individuals who render independent services to the school system shall be required to complete and submit appropriate reporting documents and forms. It shall be the principal's responsibility to ensure that all individuals to whom his/her school pays funds properly completes all required forms.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.

## TRAVEL AND EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall reimburse employees and School Board members for expenses incurred while on official School Board business, within budgetary limitations. Travel expenses shall be limited to those expenses necessarily incurred by employees in the performance of official responsibilities as may be authorized by the School Board or the Superintendent. Reimbursement of expenses shall be based on submission of a properly completed and approved *Travel Reimbursement* form and such supporting receipts as required and in accordance with approved procedures and reimbursement rates. Such expenses may be approved and incurred in line with budgetary allocations for the specific type of expense, approved procedures, and rates.

All out-of-parish travel shall be approved by the Superintendent before any out-of-parish trips are taken, and shall be submitted on a travel request form showing estimated expenses, budget item, purpose of trip, and from which account the funds will be drawn.

All employees who use their private vehicles for official School Board business shall be required to carry liability insurance. When a private vehicle is used for official School Board duties, mileage shall be reimbursed based on the rate authorized by the School Board. In no case shall an employee be allowed mileage or transportation reimbursement when the employee has been gratuitously transported by another person.

All travel reports for reimbursement should be in the business office no later than the 20th of the month. Any reports requesting reimbursement received after the 20th will not be paid until the following month. Any travel reports exceeding three (3) months period of time will not be reimbursed by the School Board. Travel reports will be turned in using the form provided by the School Board Office.

Any employee or School Board member who submits a false or fraudulent travel claim shall be subject to disciplinary action and the School Board shall be entitled to restitution.

### TRAVEL REGULATIONS

#### Supervisors' and Principals' Travel Allowance

Reimbursement for travel for supervisors and principals shall be in accordance with current state guidelines when the following conditions have been satisfied:

1. The trip must have prior approval from the Superintendent.
2. When multiple persons attend the same meeting they will ride together in the pattern which is most economical for the parish.
3. A person who drives alone to meetings due to personal business will not be reimbursed by the parish.

4. Each request for reimbursement shall be placed on the form used by the general fund bookkeeping department.
5. Schools may reimburse personnel who attend functions for extracurricular activities according to prescribed reimbursements as provided for in School Board policy. The proper documentation (mileage forms and receipts) must be maintained for auditing purposes.

#### In-Parish Mileage for Superintendent and Supervisors

Supervisors, and the Superintendent will be reimbursed for travel necessary to his/her job. It will not be necessary for each to submit a log of official travel done giving the date, destination, reason, odometer reading and mileage. It will be necessary for them to sign out denoting destinations in order to receive one thousand dollars (\$1,000) annually in twelve (12) monthly reimbursements.

#### Mileage for Principals In-Parish

Any principal or assistant principal who keeps a log as determined below will be reimbursed for travel necessary of his/her job, i.e., required trips to the School Board Office and taking students home - up to a maximum of seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) per month. It will be necessary for each to submit a log of official travel done giving the date, destination, reasons, odometer reading and mileage. Principals who do not keep a log will receive monthly reimbursements as follows:

1. The principals at Delta Junior High School, Beekman Jr. High School and Pine Grove Elementary School will be reimbursed \$850.00 per year.
2. All other principals will receive \$500.00 per year.
3. Assistant principals will be reimbursed \$40.00 per month for 10 months.
4. Principals and assistant principals who receive a set per month reimbursement described in Sections 1 through 3 above shall not be entitled to receive any per mile reimbursement or receive payment by any other means, including through the use of school or parish credit cards, for gasoline, oil or related expenses, for in parish travel.

#### TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT FOR MOREHOUSE PARISH SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

##### Reimbursement for Transportation, Lodging, Meals and Other Expenses

Morehouse Parish School Board will follow the State of Louisiana, *Louisiana Travel Guide for out-of-parish travel*.

##### Reimbursement for National School Board Association Conventions

School Board members and approved staff members attending a National School Board Association Convention located out-of-state may be reimbursed actual expenses for lodging. Additionally, they may be reimbursed actual expenses for meals not to exceed fifty dollars (\$50) plus tax per day. Receipts will be required and shall be submitted and attached to the travel reimbursement voucher.

#### Submitting Travel Reports for Reimbursement

All travel reports for reimbursement shall be in the business office no later than the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. Any reports requesting reimbursement received after the 20<sup>th</sup> will not be paid until the following month. Any travel reports exceeding three (3) months period of time will not be reimbursed by the School Board. Travel reports shall be turned in using the form provided by the School Board Office.

#### Limitation on School Board Member Travel

Beginning with the 2021-2022 school year, and until an amended policy is passed by the Morehouse Parish School Board, the Morehouse Parish School Board shall pay the legally allowable travel expenses for each member of the school board to attend three (3) out-of-parish conferences, seminars or meetings per school year, which conference, seminar or meetings must be conducted in the State of Louisiana. In addition, the Morehouse Parish School Board shall pay the legally allowable travel expenses for each member of the School Board to attend one additional out of parish conference, seminar or meeting per school year which meeting, conference or seminar must be conducted in the State of Louisiana or in the State of Mississippi or the State of Arkansas. Further, should a School Board member register for a meeting, conference or seminar and not attend, he/she shall reimburse the Morehouse Parish School Board all non-refundable expenses paid by it unless the non attendance was a fault of a family emergency of the School Board member which is defined as an unforeseen circumstance regarding the School Board member or a member of his/her family which requires immediate attention. The Morehouse Parish School Board shall not pay any travel expenses for an out-of-parish meeting to or for a School Board member if the member has not reimbursed the Morehouse Parish School Board all funds owed it pursuant to this policy.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:56, 32:861, 32:862, 32:863, 32:863.1, 32:900.

## PURCHASING

All purchasing for the Morehouse Parish School Board to be paid from public funds shall be made by the Superintendent or his/her designee in conformance with existing regulations and procedures of the Morehouse Parish School Board and the laws pertinent to state and federal agencies. Budget allocations for specific purposes shall constitute advance School Board approval for all purchases except in such cases as state law or School Board policy may require. No debt shall be contracted in the name of the Morehouse Parish School Board without action by the School Board, except those items which are provided for in the regular budget. Purchases shall be made at the lowest possible cost to the School Board consistent with specifications of quality and service.

Each principal shall assure that purchases by the individual school shall be made in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures developed by the Superintendent and staff and the laws pertinent to state and federal agencies.

No employee, officer or agent of the Morehouse Parish School Board shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract or purchase of supplies, materials and equipment if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, would be involved. School Board employees shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value from vendors, contractors, potential contractors, or parties to sub-agreements. All purchasing shall comply with the U.S. Department of Education *General Administrative Regulations* (EDGAR), the *Louisiana Public Bid Law*, the *Louisiana Code of Governmental Ethics*, the *Louisiana Procurement Code*, and applicable state or federal regulations, as applicable.

### CONTRACTS ADMINISTRATION

Formal contracts shall be required when the type or scope of product or service, the related method of delivery of such product or service, responsibilities of vendor and purchaser during the contract term, and the other terms of the purchase cannot properly be covered with a purchase order.

Contractual agreements obligating the School Board or School District shall be signed by the School Board President and the Superintendent, unless the contract is for routine and necessary expenditures to carry out general business operations, in which case the Superintendent or his/her designee shall sign.

### PROCUREMENT METHOD



Procurement Methods	State Requirement Title 38 La. Bid Law R.S. 38:2212.1
<b>Micro Purchases</b> (new method)	Purchases less than \$1,000 No competitive process required.
<b>Small Purchases</b> (informal)	\$1,000 - \$10,000 3 or more quotes required for \$5,000 or greater; and suggested but not required for below \$5,000.
	\$10,000 - \$30,000 Solicit 3 or more quotes.
<b>Sealed Bids</b> (formal advertising)	Materials and Supplies Exceeding \$30,000 Public Works Exceeding \$154,450 Publicly bid and award to lowest responsible bidder
<b>Competitive Proposals</b>	Materials and Supplies Exceeding \$30,000 Public Works Exceeding \$154,450 Publicly bid and award to lowest responsible bidder.
<b>Noncompetitive Proposals – Sole Source Purchases</b>	Sole source purchases are appropriate only under the circumstances listed below. These circumstances must be adequately documented.  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The item procured is only available from a single source;</li> <li>2. The purchase is in response to a public emergency that will not permit a delay resulting from the competitive process;</li> <li>3. The purchase is expressly authorized by awarding or pass-through agency in response to written request from the School Board; or</li> <li>4. After soliciting a number of sources competition is deemed inadequate. Process must be adequately documented.</li> </ol>

The School Board may choose by resolution to adopt the *Louisiana Procurement Code* in part or in its entirety. The School Board may also purchase from vendors with state contracts that have been pre-approved by the *Office of State Procurement (OSP)*.

USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS

All procurement of materials, supplies, and services, as well as the construction of public works, funded in whole or in part with federal funds shall comply with the requirements contained in Title 2, Section 200, of the Code of Federal Regulations. All procurements using federal funds, in whole or in part, shall employ one of the procedures identified in 2 CFR 200.320, if more stringent than those procedures required by Louisiana law. Should the School Board adopt the Louisiana Procurement Code, whether in part or in its entirety, the accompanying administrative regulations as promulgated in the Louisiana Procurement Code, as well as guidelines and policies issued by the Louisiana's Office of State Purchasing relevant to the particular adoption(s) may be applicable to the purchase, if more stringent.

Solicitations from Small and Minority Businesses, Women's Business Enterprises, and Labor Surplus Area Firms

When spending federal funds, the Morehouse Parish School Board shall take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible. Affirmative steps shall include:

1. Placing qualified small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises on solicitation lists;
2. Assuring that small and minority businesses, and women's business enterprises are solicited whenever they are potential sources;
3. Dividing total requirements, when economically feasible, into smaller tasks or quantities to permit maximum participation by small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises;
4. Establishing delivery schedules, where the requirement permits, which encourage participation by small and minority businesses and women's business enterprises;
5. Using the services and assistance, as appropriate, of such organizations as the Louisiana Economic Development Agency, and Small Business Administration and the Minority Business Development Agency of the United States Department of Commerce; and
6. Requiring the prime contractor, if subcontracts are to be let, to take the affirmative steps listed in paragraphs 1 through 5 of this section.

Exclusion or Rejection of Quotes or Bids

A contract award or a purchase made with federal funds shall not be made to parties listed on the government-wide exclusions in the *System for Award Management* maintained by the U.S. Government, which contains the names of parties debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded by agencies, as well as parties declared ineligible under statutory or regulatory authority.

USE OF STATE FUNDS

Procurement of materials and supplies when using state or locally generated funds shall follow the procurement method as authorized by Louisiana law.

Financing Purchases

The School Board may finance the purchase of equipment or other movable property to be used by the School Board by entering into an installment sale, lease, or similar

agreement with any lender or other person. If required, such agreement shall be subject to approval of the State Bond Commission in accordance with statutory provisions. No individual school or employee shall obligate the School Board without proper school system personnel knowledge and approval.

#### Use of State Contract

If equipment, materials or supplies are available from a State of Louisiana Contract, the Superintendent and/or his/her designee may approve the purchase without using one of the purchasing procedures outlined in statutory provisions, if advantageous to the School Board.

The School Board may also *piggyback*, or purchase materials and supplies on valid contracts of other political subdivisions in accordance with La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§33:1321-1337 or La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §38:321.1.

#### Louisiana Procurement Code

State law authorizes School Boards to adopt all or any part of the *Louisiana Procurement Code* as contained in state statutes (La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§39:1551-39:1755). For proper and efficient operations, the Morehouse Parish School Board may adopt, by resolution or otherwise, pertinent provisions of the *Louisiana Procurement Code*, accompanying administrative regulations as promulgated in the *Louisiana Procurement Code*, as well as guidelines and policies issued by the state's Office of State Purchasing relevant to the procurement of materials, supplies, merchandise, and other types of property.

#### Sole Source Provider

The School Board may award a contract for the purchase of supplies, services, or major repairs without competition when the Superintendent or designated employee has determined, in writing, that there is only one source for the supply, service, or major repair item(s) to be acquired. Pertinent procedures for purchasing such items from a sole source shall be as outlined in the State of Louisiana Office of State Purchasing's *Purchasing Rules and Regulations*.

#### Qualified Group Purchasing Organizations

A *qualified group purchasing organization* means an organization, whether for profit or not for profit, of which two (2) or more public school districts are members and which solicits proposals or bids from vendors of materials, equipment, or supplies of the type and nature as may be purchased by a public school district or public school.

As provided in La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §38:2212.1, the School Board may enter into an agreement with: (A) one or more School Boards to form a qualified group purchasing organization; or (B) one or more qualified group purchasing organizations for the purchase of materials, equipment, and supplies, including installation thereof. Any such agreement shall require that the qualified group purchasing organization submit a price

list for those materials, equipment, and supplies offered by it and that the prices quoted on the list remain in effect for a stated period of time of not less than three (3) months. Any such price list shall be considered, for all purposes, to be a valid and binding bid by the qualified group purchasing organization during the effective period of the agreement, and no additional bid by the qualified group purchasing organization is necessary. Price lists submitted by a qualified group purchasing organization are not public record and shall not be available for public inspection. The agreement setting forth the existence of the price list and effective date thereof is, however, a public record, and that portion of the price list setting forth the price of the materials, equipment, or supplies being purchased shall become a public record at the time of opening of bids or upon the execution of a contract for the purchase of materials, equipment, or supplies.

The School Board may purchase materials, equipment, or supplies directly from or through a qualified group purchasing organization if either the price is less than that for the same or substantially similar materials, equipment, or supplies on the state contract or bid list, or if the same or substantially similar materials, equipment, or supplies are not under state contract or on the state bid list. Nothing included in this paragraph shall be construed to authorize the School Board to purchase materials, equipment, or supplies from or through an entity or vendor other than a qualified group purchasing organization as defined herein without using a procurement process otherwise provided by state law.

#### Reverse Auction

The School Board may use a reverse auction in lieu of the more formal bid process when the School Board's procurement officer determines that the electronic bidding is more advantageous and in the best interests of the School Board. *Reverse auction* means a competitive online solicitation process on the Internet for the purchase of equipment, supplies, and other materials or consulting services.

Prior to the use of the reverse auction, the School Board may require that:

1. Vendors register before opening dates and time, and as part of the registration, require that the vendors agree to any terms and conditions and other requirements of the solicitation.
2. Vendors be prequalified prior to placing bids and allow only bidders who are prequalified to submit bids.
3. The solicitation shall designate an opening date and time and the closing date and time. The closing date and time may be fixed or remain open depending on the structure of the item being bid.
4. At the opening date and time, the School Board shall begin accepting online bids and continue accepting bids until the bidding is officially closed. Registered bidders shall be allowed to lower the price of their bid below the lowest bid posted on the Internet until the closing date and time.
5. Bidders' identities shall not be revealed during the bidding process; only the

successively lower prices, ranks, scores, and related bid details shall be revealed.

6. All bids shall be posted electronically and updated on a real-time basis.
7. The School Board shall retain the right to cancel the solicitation if it determines that it is in the School Board's best interest.
8. The School Board shall retain its existing authority to determine the criteria that will be used as a basis for making awards.

Adequate public notice for the purchases of materials, supplies, equipment, or consulting services using a reverse auction shall be given as follows:

1. The advertisement or notice shall be published two (2) times in a newspaper in the locality, the first advertisement to appear at least fifteen (15) days before the opening date of the reverse auction. In addition to the newspaper advertisement, the School Board may also publish an advertisement by electronic media available to the general public.
2. The first publication of the advertisement shall not occur on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday.

### PREFERENCES

To the extent possible, when purchasing with state or locally generated funds, the School Board shall regularly purchase products manufactured, grown, produced or harvested from the state land or waters which are of equal quality to such items produced outside the state, provided the cost of state products does not exceed by more than the statutory percentage the cost of out-of-state products or as otherwise provided by state law. Such products shall be limited to those allowed by state law.

### VENDORS

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall seek business and bids from all eligible vendors, regardless of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, age or handicap. No favoritism shall be extended to any vendor. Each order shall be placed on the basis of quality, price and delivery; past services being a factor if all other considerations are equal.

No person officially connected with or employed by the School Board shall be an agent for, or have any pecuniary or beneficial interest in or receive any compensation or reward from any vendor for the sale of supplies, materials, equipment, services or public works contracts.

No employee of the School Board shall solicit or accept, directly or indirectly, anything of economic value as a gift or gratuity from any vendor representative or agent of a vendor,

or a prospective vendor or contractor.

### CREDIT CARDS

The Superintendent may authorize the use of credit cards or procurement cards by authorized personnel to facilitate the purchase of school district materials, supplies, employee travel and gas. Only personnel employed by the School Board and authorized by the Superintendent may be permitted to use any charge card in the name of the School Board. No personal usage of any card shall be permitted.

Each person authorized by the School Board shall be issued a credit card in the name of the School Board. Once received, the card(s) shall remain in the possession of the employee/cardholder and he/she shall be held accountable for the card's usage. Documentation (purchase order and/or itemized receipt) shall be required for all purchases, credits or transactions for which the card is used.

The usage of any card issued shall be in accordance with the administrative regulations and procedures outlined by the Superintendent and/or staff. Designated School Board personnel shall be responsible for monitoring all charges, the number and amount of purchases, vendors used, as well as detailed transaction information. Misuse of any School Board credit card may result in discipline and/or personal liability for dishonored, erroneous, or improper charges.

### Gasoline or Fuel

Purchases of gasoline or fuel by credit cards shall be documented with receipt submitted to the Finance Department as soon as practicable following purchase. Documentation of the purchase shall include, at a minimum, vehicle description, number of gallons purchased, price per gallon, and signature of person filling vehicle.

Ref: 2 CFR 200 (*Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards*); 48 CFR 2.101 (*Definitions*); La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§33:1321-1337, 33:4712.7, 38:321.1, 38:2211, 38:2212, 38:2212.1, 38:2214, 38:2218, 38:2219, 38:2252, 38:2253, 38:2271, 39:1551, 39:1552, 39:1553, 39:1554, 39:1554.1, 39:1556, 39:1557, 39:1558, 39:1597, 39:1710, 39:2171.

## BIDS AND QUOTATIONS

### PUBLIC WORKS

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall advertise and let by contract, except in cases of emergencies as provided below, all public work exceeding \$250,000 or such sum as allowed by law, including labor, materials, equipment, and administrative overhead not to exceed fifteen percent (15%). The contract shall be awarded to the lowest responsible bidder who has bid according to the contract, plans, and specifications advertised. Public works which are estimated to cost less than the contract limit may be undertaken by the School Board with its own employees.

As an evidence of good faith of the bidder, the School Board shall require bidders for construction, improvement, repair, or other work to attach to the bid submitted, a bid bond, certified check, or cashier's check for not more than five percent (5%) of the contract work to be done. The School Board may require a bid bond or certified or cashier's check of not more than five percent (5%) of the estimated price on bids taken for supplies and materials.

When any bid is accepted for construction or doing any public works, a written contract shall be entered into by the successful bidder and the School Board, and the successful bidder shall furnish a bond in an amount not less than one-half of the amount of the contract, for the faithful performance of his or her duties.

When using state or locally generated funds, under no circumstances shall there be a division or separation of any public work project into smaller projects, which division or separation would have the effect of avoiding the requirement that public work be advertised and let by contract to the lowest responsible bidder in accordance with statutory provisions.

The School Board shall retain the option of requiring all bids that are let out for public works be submitted electronically.

### MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

All purchases of materials or supplies exceeding the sum of \$60,000 to be paid out of public funds shall be advertised and let by contract to the lowest responsible bidder who has bid according to the specifications as advertised. In addition, when using state or locally generated funds, purchases of materials or supplies of at least \$30,000 but not more than \$60,000, shall be made by obtaining not less than three (3) documented quotations. A written confirmation of the accepted offer shall be obtained and made a part of the purchase file. The School Board may require a written contract or bond when purchasing the materials or supplies. If quotations are received that are lower than the quote accepted, a notation shall be entered into the file as to the reasons for rejection of the lower quotes.

When using state or locally generated funds, purchases cannot be divided by

departments or by a school if the effect is to evade the state's public bid law. Purchases of commodities that are bought in small but recurring amounts through the year shall be bid on an annual basis.

The School Board shall retain the option of requiring all bids that are let out for materials and supplies be submitted electronically.

In lieu of formal bids, the School Board may use a *reverse auction* for the purchase of equipment, supplies, and other materials or consulting services, as outlined in policy *DJE, Purchasing*.

### EMERGENCIES

In cases of an emergency or extreme emergency when time is not sufficient to advertise for bids for public works or purchase of materials, the School Board or designee is permitted by law to declare through resolution that a public emergency or extreme public emergency exists and extend a contract for more than the sums mentioned without going out to bid. However, in such cases every effort shall be made by School Board personnel to secure competitive quotations. The accepted quote shall be confirmed and documented in writing. State law permits a person designated by the School Board to declare the existence of an *extreme public emergency*. This designated person shall be the Superintendent and/or his/her designee. Notices of an *emergency* or *extreme emergency* shall be published in the School Board's official journal within ten (10) days of the emergency being certified by the School Board or designee.

An *emergency* is defined by La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §38:2211 as

"An unforeseen mischance bringing with it destruction or injury of life or property or the imminent threat of such destruction or injury or as the result of an order from any judicial body to take any immediate action which requires construction or repairs absent compliance with the formalities of this Part, where the mischance or court order will not admit of the delay incident to advertising as provided in this Part."

An *extreme public emergency* is defined by La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §38:2211 as

"A catastrophic event which causes the loss of ability to obtain a quorum of the members necessary to certify the emergency prior to making the expenditure to acquire materials or supplies or to make repairs necessary for the protection of life, property, or continued function of the public entity."

### BID ADVERTISEMENTS

All advertisements for bids for public works shall appear in the newspaper selected as the official journal for the School Board, except in emergencies as may be declared by the School Board. Any advertisement for any contract for public works, when published, shall appear once a week for three (3) different weeks in a newspaper in the locality and the



first advertisement shall appear at least twenty-five (25) calendar days before the opening of bids.

Any advertisement for any contract or purchase of materials or supplies shall be published two (2) times in a newspaper in the locality, the first advertisement appearing at least fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the opening of bids.

In addition to newspaper advertisements, the School Board shall also publish advertisements and accept bids by electronic media in accordance with uniform standards promulgated by the state. In any advertisement, the first publication shall not occur on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday.

If the School Board issues or causes to be issued on a public work exceeding the contract limit set by state law, any addendum modifying plans and specifications within a period of seven (7) days prior to the advertised time for opening of bids, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and any other legal holidays, the School Board shall transmit a copy of the addendum to all prime bidders who have requested bid documents. The transmission shall be completed within twenty-four (24) hours of the issuance of the addendum, and may be delivered by either facsimile transmission (fax), e-mail, other electronic means, or by hand provided the prime bidder has supplied the fax number or e-mail address to the School Board. In addition, a copy of the addendum shall be sent by regular mail. If the addendum cannot be transmitted by fax, e-mail, other electronic means, or hand delivered, the School Board shall be required to postpone the bid opening by at least seven (7) calendar days.

The School Board shall not issue or cause to be issued any addendum modifying plans and specifications within a period of seventy-two (72) hours prior to the advertised time for the opening of bids, excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and any other legal holidays; however, if the necessity arises to issue an addendum modifying plans and specifications within the seventy-two hour period prior to the advertised time for the opening of bids, then the opening of bids shall be extended at least seven (7), but not more than twenty-one (21) working days, without the requirement of readvertising. The addendum shall state the revised time and date for the opening of bids.

#### OPENING OF BIDS

All bids shall be opened in public in the presence of one or more witnesses, at the time and place designated in the invitation for bids. Each bid, together with the name of the bidder, shall be recorded and open to public inspection. However, the School Board shall not accept or take any bids including receiving any hand delivered bids, on days which are recognized as holidays by the United States Postal Service.

#### BID AWARD

In order to protect the integrity of the competitive bidding process, the determination of

responsiveness by the bidder must be made from the bid documents at the time of the bid opening. Any deviation from or failure to supply information required by the bid documents, may result in the bid being rejected as *non-responsive*.

The Superintendent and/or other appropriate administrators shall review, summarize and report bids to the School Board with recommendations for bid award unless the School Board grants permission for staff to evaluate, award, and notify the School Board at a later date.

#### DISQUALIFICATION OF BIDDER FOR NON-RESPONSIBILITY

If the School Board proposes to disqualify any bidder for *non-responsibility* (the possibility that the bidder may not satisfactorily fulfill the contract being bid), the School Board shall:

1. Give written notice of the proposed disqualification to such bidder, and include in the written notice all reasons for the proposed disqualification;
2. Give such bidder, who is proposed to be disqualified, the opportunity to be heard at an informal hearing to be conducted not later than five (5) business days after the issuance of the notice of the proposed disqualification, at which such bidder is afforded the opportunity to refute the reasons for the disqualification; and
3. Conduct the informal hearing prior to the award of the public work.

No award of the contract for the public work shall be made by the School Board prior to the expiration of at least five (5) working days following the date of issuance of the written ruling from the informal hearing.

#### EXCLUSION OF BIDS

The School Board, after the opening of bids, shall require each bidder or bidding entity to attest or submit an attestation that the sole proprietor, partner, incorporator, director, manager, officer, or other like individual who owns at least ten percent (10%) of the bidding entity, has not been convicted of, or has not entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere (no contest) to any of the crimes or equivalent federal crimes listed in La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §38:2227.

In awarding bids or contracts, the School Board shall be authorized to reject the lowest bid from a business in which any individual with ownership interest of five percent (5%) or more has been convicted of, pled guilty or nolo contendere to any a state felony crime or equivalent federal crime committed in the solicitation or execution of a contract or bid under the state laws governing public contracts; professional, personal, consulting, and social services procurement; or the *Louisiana Procurement Code*.

Any contract between the School Board and a person or entity entered into as a result of fraud, bribery, corruption, or other criminal acts, for which a final conviction has been obtained, shall be null and void.

Any person whose conviction causes the nullity of a contract shall be responsible for payment of all costs, attorney fees, and damages incurred in the rebidding of the contract.

Ref: 2 CFR 200 (*Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards*); 48 CFR 2.101 (*Definitions*); La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§9:2716, 9:2717, 38:2181, 38:2182, 38:2211, 38:2212, 38:2212.1, 38:2212.9, 38:2214, 38:2218, 38:2227, 38:2236, 38:2237, 38:2241, 38:2251, 38:2271, 39:1551, 39:1552, 39:1553, 39:1554, 39:1554.1, 39:1556, 39:1557, 39:1558, 39:1597, 39:1710.

## PURCHASE ORDERS AND CONTRACTS

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall require, in accordance with sound principles of financial accounting, purchase orders to be prepared on items purchased in the name of the School Board. Separate purchase orders shall be prepared for each vendor involved. All purchase orders which amount to \$500.00 or more shall be signed by the Superintendent or his/her designee prior to submission to the vendor.

Telephone orders may *only* be permitted in cases of emergency and a confirming purchase order shall be created.

### SCHOOL PURCHASES

All purchases made by any school and paid for by any school shall have a school purchase order signed by the principal. Any debts over thirty (30) days past due shall be listed on the monthly financial report to the Superintendent's office.

When applicable, accounts shall be signed by the principal and the custodian of the fund.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 17:97, 39:1301, 39:1302, 39:1303, 39:1304.

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

The Morehouse Parish School Board may from time to time solicit for professional services that would be provided by individuals/companies from outside the school system. *Requests for Qualifications* shall be advertised in the official journal and copies of the *Requests for Qualifications* documents shall be made available to all firms interested in proposing. A review committee shall be appointed by the Superintendent and/or his or her designee to evaluate the proposals. The review committee shall make a recommendation to the appropriate School Board committee for consideration.

### REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS

Request for Proposal (RFP) may be used for the contracting of services. Request for proposals shall indicate the relative importance of price and other evaluation factors. For contracts made under the request for proposals (RFP) method, the department involved should establish appropriate criteria for evaluating and rating all proposals fairly. The Business Department shall maintain documentation of the evaluations. Public notice of the RFP shall be given at least thirty (30) days prior to the date scheduled for opening of the RFP.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.

## SCHOOL ACTIVITIES FUNDS MANAGEMENT

*Student activity funds* are those funds raised or collected for school-approved student groups, gate receipts, and student activity card fees. The Morehouse Parish School Board shall require all student activity funds to be collected and expended for the purpose of supporting the school's activities program. Student body representation should be encouraged whenever possible.

The principal of each school shall be responsible for all school/student accounts. The principal may assign one or more school staff member(s) to share the responsibility for assuring that the system of accountability for school funds and maintenance of records are maintained in accordance with pertinent district administrative regulations and procedures. The principal, however, shall have the ultimate responsibility for supervising the accounting functions to be performed at the building level.

All schools and school, clubs and organizations shall follow the procedures delineated in the School Board's *Activities Accounts Policy Manual*.

### SCHOOL CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS

The School Board shall require all activity funds generated by a club, organization, association, class, athletic team, or any other organization within the school to be deposited into a school fund bank account. Separate records of all financial transactions of the school fund account shall be maintained by the principal for each group. No monies shall be drawn on the school fund account without a request for withdrawal which carries two (2) signatures, one of which shall always be the principal's. No withdrawal shall occur unless the check carries the signature of the principal, or the administrator who assumes his/her duties during his/her absence.

The records of the school account shall be reconciled monthly, and a written report shall be prepared by the principal and submitted annually to the Superintendent or his/her designee, who shall review and consider the report for approval and notify the principal accordingly. The School Board may require and provide for an audit of the school fund of any school within its jurisdiction at any time.

All club or organization related fundraising activities shall be approved by the principal and may be subject to audits from the central office.

### BOOSTER CLUBS/OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS

Funds generated by an entity outside the school, such as a parents' club, community, business, civic or other similar type of organization, shall be considered to be independent funds under the exclusive control and supervision of the club or organization. The School Board, however, shall require all such funds, when expended for any school function, activity, or purpose, to adhere fully to all state and federal statutory and regulatory provisions.

In addition, the School Board may place restrictions on the donation and usage of any monies by an outside source, i.e. club, organization, or entity, to a school or School Board-related entity. Specifically prohibited shall be the donation to an individual employee of the School Board anything of economic value in the form of money, personalized articles, automobiles and/or their use, travel, entertainment or vacations. The School Board reserves the right to examine the provisions of any and all prospective donations to a school or School Board-related entity to ascertain the propriety of the donation.

#### OTHER SCHOOL FUNDS

Schools may have other fund accounts as part of their school activity funds. Sources of money for these funds may include vending machines, coffee fees, and teacher dues. These funds may only be used to benefit the faculty or school as a whole. Any purchases made from these funds should be done with caution, as restrictions apply to the expenditure of such funds. Any questions about purchases should be directed to the Superintendent or designee for clarification before the purchase is made.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 17:414.3, 51:224; Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators, Bulletin 741, Louisiana Department of Education.

### CASH IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall direct that no money shall be left overnight in an unlocked safe, nor shall any principal or teacher keep cash in his or her office or classroom overnight. Sound business procedure requires principals, teachers, bookkeepers, and any other person in any school handling funds to forward money to the principal's office on the day of collection, to be deposited on the same day of collection, whenever possible, except for small sums needed for petty cash.

Principals and other school personnel shall establish necessary precautions to ensure the safekeeping of all monies under their control, which shall be in compliance with applicable district administrative regulations and procedures.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:95.



## SCHOOL LOANS

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall require all school-based installment obligations, lease agreements or other financing agreement to be approved by the Superintendent. In determining whether to approve such debt obligations, the Superintendent shall consider the school's financial status and history of repayment.

Copies of all approved requests along with completed copies of the debt instrument shall be maintained in the Central Office. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall submit a request to incur debt to the State Bond Commission if the debt obligation is for a period beyond ninety (90) days.

The term "debt" or "evidence of debt" shall not include a lease of a movable or an installment purchase agreement financing the purchase of a movable if the lease or installment purchase agreement contains a non-appropriation clause, and does not contain an anti-substitution or penalty clause; provided that if such lease or installment purchase agreement is entered into in conjunction with the issuance of bonds, notes, certificates, or other obligations which would otherwise be required to be approved by the State Bond Commission, State Bond Commission approval of such financing transaction shall continue to be required.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 39:1410.60.

## **BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT**

It shall be the policy of the Morehouse Parish School Board to require that school properties be maintained in good physical and sanitary condition. The School Board, therefore, shall instruct the Superintendent to assure that all normal building and grounds maintenance, repairs and improvement functions are an integral part of the administration of the school system, including the regular evaluation for any safety hazards.

The School Board recognizes that to maintain the buildings, grounds, playgrounds and equipment at acceptable safety-related standards, to adequately repair, alter or improve properties and to effectively plan and construct all commensurate with the requirements of the educational program requires the services and skills of many trained persons. Though its resources are limited, the School Board shall provide safe, clean, and adequately maintained facilities for all enrolled students. Contractual work shall be initiated after School Board approval and in accordance with state statutes for items which are not sufficiently repetitive in nature to justify additional employment or specialized staff or equipment.

The Superintendent shall be vested with a broad range of administrative and supervisory authority relative to the School Board's buildings and grounds program. Regular reports shall be made available to the School Board relative to maintenance needs, sanitary condition, safety, utility and attractiveness of school plants and grounds within the school system.

The School Board shall not be held responsible for any personal items stolen or damaged on school premises. The School Board shall require principals and/or persons in charge of public school property to prohibit the use, sale, or possession of alcoholic beverages on public school property.

### OWNERSHIP OF FACILITIES

All construction and renovation of property owned or operated by the Morehouse Parish School Board, including but not limited to the addition of murals, bricks and tiles to construction and renovation to the grounds, facilities and buildings owned by the Morehouse Parish School Board, shall be the property of and owned by the Morehouse Parish School Board.

No mural, brick, tile or other addition or construction shall contain any writing or other marking which shall be considered racially offensive, sexually offensive or vulgar, nor may it contain religious symbols, words or symbols which are obscene or offensive or any symbols or words which incite racial, religious or other conflicts in a school.

### VACANT AND/OR UNOCCUPIED BUILDINGS

Vacant and/or unoccupied premises owned by the School Board shall be properly secured and maintained to prevent unauthorized trespass or injury to the general public. It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent or his/her designee to assure that any vacant and/or unoccupied property of the School Board has limited access for authorized personnel only and the grounds are maintained regularly.

#### SMOKING/TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL BOARD PROPERTY

The use of any tobacco product, smokeless tobacco, or any smoking object/device, including but not limited to electronic cigarettes, advanced personal vaporizers, vape pens, vape mods and similar devices, shall be prohibited on and in all School Board property and vehicles, and at all school-sponsored or school-approved functions. However, this prohibition shall not be applicable to any tobacco product approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration for sale as a tobacco cessation product and which is marketed and sold solely for such purpose.

*School Board property* shall include any elementary or secondary school buildings or grounds, buildings, portable buildings, field houses, stadiums, equipment storage areas, vacant land, or any other property owned, operated, or leased by the School Board, as well as any school vehicle used for the provision of academic and extracurricular programs and administration at any elementary or secondary school.

Tobacco advertising shall also be prohibited in school buildings, at school functions, and in all school publications.

#### Communication of Policy

Visitors shall be informed of this policy through posted signs at the entrances to the grounds of any School Board property and each school and school buildings, and within school vehicles.

#### RESTRICTED USE OF SCHOOL BOARD PROPERTY

Horses shall not be permitted on School Board property or school grounds at any time, whether or not the horse is accompanied by an attendant or rider, except when needed for security reasons or when used by students as qualified service animals.

Automobiles, motorcycles, motorbikes, minibikes and trail machines and other motor vehicles shall be prohibited on Morehouse Parish School Board property at any time, including, but not limited to school campuses, satellite administrative buildings, maintenance buildings and any parking areas of any School Board facility. Violators shall be prosecuted for trespassing. This prohibition shall not apply to said vehicles using the driveways and parking areas during school hours and for regularly scheduled school programs or with permission of the principal of the school.

All types of skating, including, but not limited to, rollerblading, skateboarding, inline skating, and bicycling shall also be prohibited on School Board property. These

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provisions do not apply to such activities when they are sponsored and supervised by a school or during an authorized summer youth program; students who ride bicycles to school when they are on the property during school hours; and others on official School Board business during business hours.

Ref: 20 USC 6083 (*Non-Smoking Policy for Children's Services*); La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§14:91.7, 17:87.6, 17:151, 17:100.6, 17:240, 17:416, 40:4, 40:1291.2, 40:1291.3, 40:1291.11, 40:1291.21, 40:1563, 40:1578.6, 40:1583; Louisiana Sanitary Code, Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals.

## SAFETY PROGRAM

Employee, student, or visitor accidents are undesirable, unplanned occurrences which cannot be prevented and which often result in bodily harm, loss of time, expensive legal action, property damage, needless cost, and personal pain and suffering. A system-wide program of safety shall be maintained by the Superintendent and staff in order to render the school system environment as hazard-free as possible. Provisions of the safety program shall be in compliance with all state and federal guidelines. All available information and assistance shall be utilized to enhance the safety of the school system.

As part of the safety program, the Morehouse Parish School Board shall require regular inspections of the buildings and grounds of each school, by the principal or the building administrator at non-school sites. Quarterly inspections, documented in writing, concerning the condition of all buildings within the system in terms of student, employee, and public care and safety shall be submitted by the principal or building administrator to the Superintendent or designee.

### EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Supervisors and school administrators shall acquaint each employee under their charge with the school emergency preparedness guidelines and his/her area of responsibility in the event of emergency. They should supervise, implement and evaluate all on-going disaster preparedness programs for the school or department.

Faculty members shall provide students with instructions in the area of disaster preparedness and participate in disaster preparedness training programs.

Every school should have a well-stocked first aid kit and one or more individuals responsible for it.

Principals and supervisors shall have readily available the phone numbers of the fire department, police department, ambulance service, all bus operators and substitute operators.

### TRAINING PROGRAM

A safety training program for all new employees shall be conducted by the school or facility administrator or his/her designee. New employees shall receive instruction with regard to the use of personal safety equipment and the source(s) for procuring assistance when needed.

### ACCIDENT REPORTING

It shall be the duty and responsibility of each employee to report immediately any accident or injury that takes place at school or any other event or facility of the Morehouse Parish

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School Board to his or her principal, or if there is no principal at the site, to the job site supervisor. If there is any accident, whether or not there appears to be any immediate injury, the accident must also be reported immediately. Any employee who fails to report a job-related accident or injury or any principal or job site supervisor who fails to complete and turn in the appropriate written report as set forth in policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, the minimum of which shall be an exception sheet placed in the employee's personnel file. For repeated infractions, additional disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including termination.

All employees should report to their principal or other job site supervisor dangerous conditions or unsafe work situations so that corrective action may be undertaken.

### FIRST AID

It shall be the responsibility of the school or the facility administrator to schedule and implement employee first aid programs that shall provide trained first aid persons at each site. Laboratory instructors, coaches, vocational and shop instructors, cafeteria personnel and maintenance department personnel should undergo first-aid training and continue to maintain their first-aid certification.

A complete first-aid kit shall be placed and maintained in all potentially hazardous areas, such as shops, labs, cafeterias, janitors' rooms, and physical education departments. A log sheet shall be kept at each job site, and all first-aid treatment shall be logged to show the date, name of employee, job title, and reason for treatment and the first-aid service provided.

### RECORDKEEPING

Records of injuries are essential to an efficient and successful loss control program. They provide a means for gauging frequency and severity areas of operation for providing information concerning the cause of loss. Therefore, the Morehouse Parish School Board shall require adequate accident and safety records be kept by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 17:416.9, 17:2114, 23:1034, 23:1291, 40:1578.6;  
Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators, Bulletin 741, Louisiana  
Department of Education.

## FIRE PREVENTION

The Morehouse Parish School Board recognizes the need for fire prevention/precaution in order to protect its employees, students, visitors, and property from the hazards of fire. Reducing and/or eliminating the fire hazards in and around the schools and other School Board property should be everyone's responsibility. All school buildings shall be equipped with an adequate fire alarm system.

As a prerequisite in its fire prevention strategies, the School Board shall require inspections by qualified persons of all fire safety and prevention equipment, including but not limited to fire alarm and smoke detection devices at each school under the School Board's jurisdiction, as well as all other School Board property, at least twice during each school year. All necessary service, repairs, and precautions shall be taken by appropriate persons in a timely manner to assure that all such equipment is in good working order and meets the needs for which it was intended. Employees of the School Board may perform the required inspections called for in this policy provided they have received the appropriate training necessary to perform such inspections, and documentation of such training shall be included in the employee's personnel file.

School personnel shall cooperate with the local fire department in making building inspections, suggesting improvements to reduce fire hazards, and disseminating of information designed to make school children and the public more conscious of fire hazards.

The supervision and implementation of the inspection requirements shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent and/or his/her designee. Reports on all inspections shall be maintained and submitted to the Superintendent and/or designee upon completion of the inspection.

The principal or his/her designee shall make a periodic review and frequent inspections of all school buildings and facilities for potential fire and other hazards. Open flame areas for instructional purposes shall be designated by the principal or building administrator at each School Board facility, or his/her designee, with the designation to be approved by the Superintendent prior to such usage. Lighted, scented candles, or other open flames shall not be permitted at any school campus or other School Board facility, with limited exception where an open fire may occur, such as a bonfire, and is approved by the Superintendent. Such events shall require submission of a request outlining guidelines to be adhered to during the event and utilizing local and/or state fire standards. This policy shall not apply to open flames required for maintenance and/or construction needs.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81; Life Safety Code, National Fire Prevention Association.

## SCHOOL AND STUDENT SAFETY

The Morehouse Parish School Board is committed to providing a safe environment for the students and employees of its schools. The School Board shall take immediate action to address any potential threats of violence or terrorism to students and employees as required by the *Louisiana School and Student Safety Act* (La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:409.1-17:410).

The School Board shall develop, in consultation with local law enforcement agencies, age appropriate information regarding internet and cell phone safety and online content that is a potential threat to school safety. The information shall include how to recognize and report potential threats to school safety posted on the internet, including but not limited to social media posts. This information shall be distributed or explained to school personnel and students at the beginning of each school year, and posted on an easily accessible page of each school's website, as well as the website of the School Board. Such information shall include instruction on how to detect potential threats to school safety, visual examples of possible threats, and the process for reporting such threats.

### DEFINITIONS

*Risk is imminent* means that the available facts, when viewed in light of surrounding circumstances, would cause a reasonable person to believe that the event stated in the threat is about to happen.

*School* is as defined by La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:236 as an institution for the teaching of children, consisting of an adequate physical plant, whether owned or leased, instructional staff members, and students, and which operates a minimum session of not less than one hundred eighty (180) days.

*Student* means any person registered or enrolled at a school.

*Threat is credible* means that the available facts, when viewed in light of surrounding circumstances, would cause a reasonable person to believe that the person communicating the threat actually intends to carry out the threat.

*Threat of terrorism* means communication, whether oral, visual, or written, including but not limited to electronic mail, letters, notes, social media posts, text messages, blogs, or posts on any social networking website, of any crime of violence that would reasonably cause any student, teacher, principal, or school employee to be in sustained fear for his safety, cause the evacuation of a building, or cause other serious disruption to the operation of a school.

*Threat of violence* means communication, whether oral, visual, or written, including but not limited to electronic mail, letters, notes, social media posts, text messages, blogs, or posts on any social networking website, of any intent to kill, maim, or cause great bodily



harm to a student, teacher, principal, or school employee on school property or at any school function.

### MANDATORY REPORTING

Any administrator, teacher, counselor, bus operator, or other school employee, whether full-time or part-time, who learns of a threat of violence or threat of terrorism, whether through oral communication, written communication, or electronic communication, shall immediately report the threat to a local law enforcement agency and, if the employee is not the school administrator, to the school administrator.

Upon being informed of the threat, the school administrator shall make reasonable efforts to attempt to inform all persons who are targets of the threat and shall take all necessary measures to protect their lives and safety.

The school administrator next shall make reasonable efforts to attempt to notify the appropriate personnel within the School District administration.

The school administrator and the School District administrator then shall determine if risk is imminent for any other persons because of the threat, and if so, notify them and make reasonable efforts to attempt to take measures to protect their lives and safety.

The school administrator and the School District administrator then shall determine whether to notify parents of the students at the school.

No person shall have a cause of action against any person for any action taken or statement made in adherence with the requirement for reporting as provided herein. However, the immunity from liability provided in this policy shall not apply to any action or statement if the action or statement was maliciously, willfully, and deliberately intended to cause harm to, harass, or otherwise deceive law enforcement or school officials.

### Reporting Procedures

The Superintendent shall develop and maintain administrative procedures for reporting potential threats to school safety. The reporting procedures, at a minimum, shall include:

1. A standardized form to be used by students and school personnel to report potential threats which requests, at a minimum, the following information:
  - A. Name of school, person, or group being threatened.
  - B. Name of student, individual, or group threatening violence.
  - C. Date and time the threat was made.
  - D. Method by which the threat was made, including the social media outlet or

website where the threat was posted, a screenshot or recording of the threat, if available, and any printed evidence of the threat.

2. A process for allowing school personnel to assist students in completing the standardized form.
3. A process for allowing reporting by an automated voice system.
4. A process for allowing anonymous reporting and for safeguarding the identity of a person who reports a threat.
5. For every threat reported, a school administrator shall record, on the form provided, the action taken by the school.

If information reported to a school is deemed a threat the school shall present the form and evidence to local law enforcement agencies.

If the information poses an immediate threat, school administrators shall follow procedures provided in the school's *Crisis Management and Response Plan*.

#### THREAT ASSESSMENT

When any threat of violence or terrorism has been reported to a school administrator, an investigation shall be made according to administrative procedures which shall include, at a minimum:

1. Conducting an interview with the person reporting a threat, the person allegedly making a threat, and all witnesses, and;
2. Securing any evidence, including but not limited to statements, writings, recordings, electronic messages, and photographs.

If the investigation results in evidence or information that raises a concern that a threat is credible, the school and School District shall implement measures to provide for ongoing protection of the safety and lives of all students and staff at the school.

#### MANDATORY EXAMINATION

If a law enforcement agency, based on its investigation as required by La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:409.4, determines that a student's threat is credible and imminent, it shall report it to the district attorney, who may file a petition no later than seven (7) days after receiving such report with the appropriate judicial district court for medical, psychological, and psychiatric examination. Where the district attorney, in his/her discretion, decides not to file the petition or does not file such petition during the requisite period, the student who is the subject of a complaint and investigation shall be permitted to return to school unless

the student is charged with assault on a teacher as provided in La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §14:38.2 or battery on a teacher as provided in La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §14:34.3. The school shall permit a student who is the subject of a complaint and investigation to return to school if at any point prior to a hearing the threat is determined not to be credible after an investigation by the school administration, a law enforcement agency, or the district attorney or by order of the court after a hearing unless the student is charged with assault on a teacher as provided in La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §14:38.2 or battery on a teacher as provided in La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §14:34.3. The school administrator shall notify any person who was a target of the threat at least two (2) school days prior to the student's return. The school administrator or his/her designee may conduct a search of the student or his property for weapons upon the student's return.

If the person who is reported to a local law enforcement agency is not a student, he or she shall not be permitted to be within five hundred feet (500') of any school until he or she has undergone a formal medical or mental health evaluation and has been deemed by a healthcare professional not to be dangerous to himself/herself or others. After such a determination, the person shall not be permitted in a school unless he has notified the school administrator of his intent to visit the school and he is notified that the administrator has provided at least two (2) school days' notice regarding the visit to anyone in the school who was directly threatened by the person. The school administrator may deny such person the right to visit the school.

#### LIABILITY

No person shall have a cause of action against any person for an action taken or statement made in adherence with this policy unless based on conduct that is maliciously, willfully, and deliberately intended to cause harm or harass.

New policy: September 5, 2023

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:236, 17:409.1, 17:409.2, 17:409.3, 17:409.4, 17:409.5, 17:410; Board minutes, 9-5-23.

## EMERGENCY/CRISIS MANAGEMENT

### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR EVACUATION

It shall be the policy of the Morehouse Parish School Board to provide a comprehensive plan for evacuation of schools in the event of a disaster. Disaster may come in many forms such as chemical spills, bomb threats, and/or a state of National Emergency. In cooperation with the local police and fire departments, 911 Call Center, the Morehouse Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, and the Morehouse Parish Sheriff's Office, the plan shall include all centers and schools located in Morehouse Parish.

### CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND RESPONSE

Unanticipated tragic events can quickly escalate into a school-wide catastrophe if not dealt with immediately and effectively. School personnel shall plan in advance for the welfare, safety, and care of students and staff members. The School Board shall require the development and annual review of an *Emergency Operations Plan* for the school district to provide for the coordination between the School Board, schools, and federal, state and local agencies to ensure the safety of students and personnel and to prevent and minimize property damage, and to ensure the continuity of the School Board's business operations.

Every school shall be required to have a *Crisis Management and Response Plan* and a *District Threat Assessment Team*. The School District shall have an *Emergency Preparedness and Recovery Point of Contact*.

### DEFINITIONS

*Crisis Management and Response Plan* shall mean a plan to address school safety and the incidence of a shooting or other violence at schools, on school buses, and at school-related activities; to respond effectively to such incidents; and to ensure that every student, teacher, and school employee has access to a safe, secure, and orderly school that is conducive to learning. The plan shall also address the management of any other emergency situation.

*District Threat Assessment Team* shall mean a team established by the School Board. The team shall include the Superintendent; the principal of each school; a person with responsibility over the school facilities; a mental health professional employed by the School Board, or, if the School Board has no such employee, a mental health professional selected by the Superintendent; any school resource officer employed by the School Board; any Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps instructor employed by the School Board; and the emergency preparedness and recovery point of contact.

*Emergency preparedness and recovery point of contact* which shall mean a person selected by the Superintendent to serve as a point of contact with local and state officials

and the media in the event of an emergency.

### CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND RESPONSE PLAN

The *Crisis Management and Response Plan* shall be prepared by principal jointly with local law enforcement, fire, public safety, and emergency preparedness officials. The plan shall seek to utilize resources and information available through the Louisiana Commission on School and Nonprofit Security, La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §29:726.5, et seq. In preparing or revising the plan, the principal shall consult with the District Threat Assessment Team. The principal and the Threat Assessment Team shall determine whether to consider input from students enrolled in the school and their parents, teachers at the school, other school employees, and community leaders.

The plan, which shall focus on preventing the loss of life and the injury of students and teachers and other school employees, shall:

1. Detail the roles and responsibilities of each school employee and of each local and state public safety and emergency preparedness office.
2. Include the relevant coordination agreements, services, and security measures of a school.
3. Provide for an all-hazards approach response plan for emergency events including any event with a hostage, an active shooter, or a building lock-down.
4. Provide for notification of parents, faculty, staff, and local public safety officials in the event of a shooting or other violent incident or emergency situation.
5. Provide for the counseling of students by mental health professionals, encouraging peer helper programs, and identifying students who may have experienced rejection or other traumatic life events.

Each principal, jointly with local law enforcement, fire, public safety, school resource officers, and emergency preparedness officials, shall review the plan at least once annually and shall revise the plan as necessary. When conducting the annual review for a high school, the school principal shall seek input from the president of the senior class or the president of the student council, and at least one other responsible student selected by the principal as representatives of students enrolled in the high school. Each principal shall submit the plan in writing to the Superintendent for approval at least once annually, including upon each revision, and shall notify all teachers and other school employees of the contents of the plan and any revisions made to it.

Within the first thirty (30) days of each school year, each principal shall conduct a safety drill to rehearse the components of the *Crisis Management and Response Plan*, including an active shooter scenario. In addition, each school year, each principal shall conduct at least one additional drill during high traffic or transition points in the school day. Not later than seven (7) days after each drill, the principal shall submit a written report summarizing

the details of the drill to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall comment on the drill to the principal, who shall consider the comments in revising the plan.

Each *Crisis Management and Response Plan* shall provide that:

1. Classroom doors with locks shall be in compliance with all fire safety standards promulgated by the office of state fire marshal code enforcement and building safety of the Department of Public Safety and Corrections and shall remain locked during instructional time. Each plan shall provide that a locked door shall not obstruct egress.
2. If legislative funding is provided, bleeding control kits shall be placed in easily accessible locations in each school; and,
3. The principal shall designate employees to be trained in the proper use of a bleeding control kit and in traumatic injury response.

A person acting in good faith who administers aid for a traumatic injury, including through the use of a bleeding control kit, shall be immune from criminal and civil liability for the administration, unless personal injury results from the gross negligence or willful or wanton misconduct in the administration of aid.

Each school year, each principal shall be responsible for providing in-service training, which may be incorporated into a meeting or training session held for another purpose, for all teachers and school employees pertaining to the plan and shall involve local law enforcement, fire, public safety, and emergency preparedness officials in the preparation and presentation of the training. The training shall include an active shooter exercise. The training shall be reported to the Superintendent and the Louisiana Department of Education.

Each principal shall keep a copy of the approved plan in his office and shall provide a copy to the following individuals and departments, each of whom shall be responsible for keeping in his/her respective office a copy of the plan that is readily accessible in the event of a school shooting or other violent incident or emergency situation:

1. The President of the School Board;
2. The Superintendent; and,
3. The chief of police of the municipality or the sheriff of the parish where the school is located, as applicable, as well as the local fire chief whose office is in closest geographic proximity to the school.
4. The Louisiana Department of Education.
5. The Center for Safe Schools within the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Procedures.

The School Board may adopt rules and regulations as it deems necessary to provide for the implementation of the provisions of this Plan.

The Superintendent shall make an annual report to the School Board on the status of the plan of each school under the School Board's jurisdiction and shall submit a copy of the report to the Louisiana Department of Education and the Center for Safe Schools.

#### OTHER EMERGENCY DRILLS

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall require procedures be planned by the principal and faculty of each school to assure orderly movement and evacuation of students to the safest area in the event of fire, weather, or other disasters. Practice drills shall be used to ensure the effectiveness of the procedures.

Every separate administration building shall conduct practice drills as well.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:416.16, 29:726.5, 29:726.5.1, 40:1578.6; Louisiana School Transportation Specifications and Procedures, Bulletin 119, Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators, Bulletin 741, Louisiana Department of Education; Life Safety Code, National Fire Protection Association.

## EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOLS

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall grant the authority to the Superintendent to determine and announce the closing of schools whenever prevailing or potential hazards or the spread of infectious disease threatens the safety and well-being of pupils, staff, or school property. The decision to close schools shall be made by the Superintendent or his/her designee after conferring, when administratively feasible, with members of the School Board, appropriate professional staff, and other governmental agencies responsible for the safety and well-being of the community.

The Superintendent's office shall notify news media and other such persons and organizations as necessary of the decision to dismiss students early, or the closure of any schools, School Board offices or facilities. Each School Board member shall also be notified of any school closing. Public announcements and releases to news media shall be made or approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

If students have reported to school and an emergency arises during the school day, students may be dismissed early. Such dismissal shall be only by direction of the Superintendent. In the event of dismissal during the school day, all educational and building employees are to continue their work, unless otherwise notified by the Superintendent. In cases where students are dismissed early, teachers shall be expected to supervise all students under their jurisdiction until they have departed from the school campus.

When the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) or the Governor of Louisiana orders the evacuation of any area, or closures of schools or any other School Board facilities, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall immediately coordinate the dismissal of students residing in the affected zones.

If an emergency situation arises, closure of schools shall be considered on an individual basis. *Crisis Management Plans* for each school or facility shall be followed.

During severe weather or other emergency situations, the Superintendent, after conferring with the School Board President, shall have the authority to excuse employees of the Morehouse Parish School Board from reporting to work. *Emergency Situation* shall mean any circumstances that may expose School Board employees to harmful or unsafe conditions, as determined by the Superintendent.

The Superintendent shall be authorized to determine which essential employees may be needed to work during any emergency.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. 17:81.



## TRAFFIC AND PARKING CONTROL

Students, teachers and other employees who drive motor vehicles to school must possess valid Louisiana operators' licenses and liability insurance as required under Louisiana law. The principal of each school may require each such operator of each vehicle which is driven to a school to register that vehicle and pay such fees and display such insignia on the vehicle as the principal of the school may require.

All vehicles must be parked in parking areas designated by the principal.

The arrival and departure of vehicles on the school campus shall be regulated by the principal.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81.

## BUILDING AND GROUNDS SAFETY INSPECTIONS

Safety inspections are one of the primary means of locating accident causes. They determine the safeguards necessary to remove hazards from the workplace. As such, inspections are valuable in controlling accidents.

Inspections are not conducted to find out what is wrong, but conducted to be helpful and bring the operations up to acceptable standards resulting in a safer work environment.

Physical premises safety inspections must be done by the department supervisor, principal, or designated person appointed by the principal on a monthly basis. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall conduct inspections annually or as deemed necessary. Their primary function is to observe and correct unsafe acts and conditions. The principal of the school will sign for approval on all inspections before the form is sent to the Superintendent or designee.

Premises inspection must be made utilizing the Morehouse Parish School Board self-inspection checklist with corrective action taken as indicated. Other inspections must be conducted in target areas, i.e., high frequency areas, areas subject to heavy public exposure, etc. Suggested items inspected should include: housekeeping, fire protection, security, hand tools, lift equipment, machine guarding, etc.

In addition, all fire safety and prevention equipment, including but not limited to fire alarm and smoke detection devices at each school shall be inspected at least twice during each school year under the direction of the Supervisor of the Maintenance Department. The Supervisor shall ensure that he/she, or the person he/she designates for the inspections, shall have received the appropriate training necessary to perform such inspections. Each inspection shall ensure that all necessary actions are taken in a timely manner to ensure that all fire safety and prevention equipment, including but not limited to fire alarm and smoke detection devices at each school, is in good working order and meets the need for which it was intended.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 40:1578.6.

## HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

The Morehouse Parish School Board, in its efforts to contain and control the dangers of hazardous substances, authorizes the Superintendent or his/her designee to establish and maintain administrative regulations and procedures which address the purchase, storage, handling, use, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials for all school facilities and operations including instructional areas. Emergency response actions and evacuation plans shall also be coordinated with the procedures.

Administrative regulations and procedures shall be in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations which pertain to the safe and proper storage, transportation, and disposal of hazardous materials.

## PESTICIDES

The Morehouse Parish School Board recognizes that the exposure of school children to pesticides poses known and unknown risks to their health and well-being. Therefore, the School Board shall prepare or cause to be prepared, and submit to the Department of Agriculture and Forestry on or before August first of each year a single comprehensive integrated pest management plan for all schools under its jurisdiction that applies integrated pest management strategies of pest prevention methods and strongly recommends the least toxic methods of control for grass and weed control, and rodent and general pest control in, on or around school structures and grounds. Any deviation from the submitted annual pest management plan shall be delivered in writing to the Director of Pesticide and Environmental Programs, *Department of Agriculture and Forestry* no later than twenty-four (24) hours prior to any pesticide application. Records of inspections, identification, monitoring, evaluations, and pesticide applications shall be maintained by the schools and submitted with the annual pesticide management plan to the department annually.

In addition to a comprehensive pest management plan, the School Board, in accordance with statutory provisions shall:

1. Assure that the application of any herbicide, rodenticide, insecticide or restricted use pesticide, in, on, or around structures or grounds of schools that provide education to pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade classes shall be done by or under the supervision of a certified commercial applicator.
2. Require each school to maintain a hypersensitive student registry listing the names of students whose parents have submitted a written statement to the school which shall include but not be limited to the student's name and address, parent's or guardian's signature, name and address, and a written medical verification by a licensed physician which includes the physician's signature, name and address.
3. Require that schools shall use, whenever possible, the least toxic method of pest

control. The least toxic method of pest control may include methods other than the application of pesticides. A restricted use pesticide shall be applied to a school building or on school grounds only during periods in which students are not expected to be present for normal academic instruction or organized extracurricular activity for at least eight (8) hours after the application.

4. Require each school to keep a written record of restricted use pesticides used to control pests, with an entry of pertinent information about the application being recorded after each application. The written record shall be kept in each school and shall be available for inspection during school hours.
5. Employ at least one (1) certified commercial applicator if the system has less than ten (10) schools or at least two (2) certified commercial applicators if the system has ten (10) or more schools.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§3:3381, 3:3382, 3:3383, 3:3384, 3:3385, 3:3386, 3:3387, 3:3388, 3:3389; Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators, Bulletin 741, Louisiana Department of Education.

## USE OF AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR (AED) AND CARDIAC EMERGENCY PLAN

The Morehouse Parish School Board directs that each elementary, middle and high school shall have an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) on its premises in an easily accessible location. Each school shall have the authority to accept donations of AEDs or funds to acquire AEDs.

Any expected AED user (those designated by the Superintendent or principal to render emergency care at that school) shall receive appropriate training in the use of AEDs from any nationally recognized course in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and AED use. All training of personnel in the use of AEDs shall be fully documented.

The School Board shall notify a local provider of emergency medical services (such as a 911 service, local ambulance service, or fire department) of the acquisition, location, and type of any AED device.

This policy shall not create an obligation to use an AED, nor is it intended to create any expectation that an AED will be present or that a trained employee will be present and/or able to use an AED, if a condition arises making the use of an AED beneficial.

In addition to the civil immunity provided to persons rendering emergency assistance as provided by law, any person or entity which provides training in CPR and in the use of an AED and any expected AED user shall not be liable for any civil damages arising from any act or omission of acts related to the operation of or failure to operate an AED that do not amount to willful or wanton misconduct or gross negligence.

### INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC EVENTS

Any elementary, middle, or high school that sponsors an interscholastic athletic event shall have an AED and a trained AED user who is also trained in first-aid CPR at the event.

Each elementary, middle, and high school shall have a "cardiac emergency response plan". For purposes of this Subparagraph, a "cardiac emergency response plan" means a written document that establishes the specific steps to reduce death from cardiac arrest at an interscholastic athletic event.

A school cardiac emergency response plan shall be prepared by each principal jointly with local emergency responders. The plan, which shall focus on preventing the loss of life, shall integrate at a minimum the following guidelines:

1. Establishing a cardiac emergency response team.
2. Activating the team in response to a sudden cardiac arrest.

3. Implementing AED placement and routine maintenance within the school.
4. Maintaining ongoing staff training in CPR and AED use.
5. Practicing using drills.
6. Integrating local EMS with the plan.
7. Annually reviewing and evaluating the plan.

COMPLIANCE

Schools shall be in compliance with all regulations for training, use and maintenance of AEDs as established by the Louisiana Department of Health.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§9:2793, 17:81, 40:1137.2, 40:1137.3.

## PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY

When a declared public health emergency exists, the Morehouse Parish School Board shall grant the Superintendent broad authority to develop, implement, and maintain administrative regulations and procedures necessary to protect employees and students from the conditions giving rise to the declared emergency.

In the development and implementation of necessary administrative regulations and procedures for safely reopening of schools or maintaining the safety of employees and students when schools are open during a health emergency, the Superintendent and staff shall rely upon the practices, guidelines, and suggestions of the Louisiana Department of Education in coordination with the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81, 17:439.1, 17:3391; Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators, Bulletin 741, Louisiana Department of Education.

## INDOOR AIR QUALITY

### INCREASING CLEANLINESS AND ORGANIZATION

1. Classroom Cleanliness and Organization - Schools will ensure clean classrooms by reducing clutter which serves as a haven for dust and pests which will increase the incidences of asthma attacks and other negative health outcomes.
2. Dust/Dirt Source Control - Schools will ensure the use of proper and clean walk-off mats to trap dirt at all major entrance ways into the school building.
3. Schedule Maintenance – Schools shall be cleaned regularly. Large maintenance projects (i.e.: large area mopping/waxing, painting, vacuuming, carpet cleaning, spraying for pests) should be scheduled after hours or when most students are not there. Students should not be allowed to be outside in the area of grass cutting. Whenever possible, grass cutting shall be performed when the least number of students are present.
4. Scent Procedures - Schools will ensure that the use of air fresheners, air sanitizers, scented candles, plug-ins and other products used to mask odors are discouraged.
5. Chemical Use Safety - Schools will ensure there is a plan in place for emergency spills. Schools will carefully order and plan for only what is needed for the school year and reduce chemicals brought into the school environment by school staff. Laboratory chemicals purchased by the school district will be properly stored and labeled.

### HEATING, VENTING AND AIR CONDITIONING (HVAC) MAINTENANCE

6. Air Flow Maintenance - Schools will ensure sufficient air flow through air intake and air distribution through the facilities' heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) system by
  - A. reducing blockage to air vents in classrooms and other occupied areas of the school;
  - B. replace filters per maintenance schedule; and
  - C. confirming that outdoor air is entering the intake appropriately.

### REDUCING EXPOSURE TO ANIMAL AND PEST ALLERGENS IN THE SCHOOL SETTING

7. No Animal Produced Irritants - Students and staff who have allergies and asthma are



particularly sensitive to animal dander, hair, and feces. It is highly recommended that schools eliminate all animals with fur inside the school unless they are assistance animals because dander from pets is known to worsen asthma. If animals are used in the school setting for educational purposes, the school district should require:

- A. animals to be restricted for use only throughout the duration of the educational activity to limit exposure for person who may be sensitive;
  - B. animals be contained in an enclosed cage that is cleaned and disinfected by the teacher regularly;
  - C. animals to be located on hard surfaces of the floor, not carpet;
  - D. animals to be located away from supply and return vents to avoid circulating allergens through the building;
  - E. parents or guardians to be informed in advance of any animal visiting; and
  - F. animals to be in good health with appropriate and up-to-date vaccinations.
8. Pest Control - Schools will ensure that there is an integrated pest management program in place that focuses on prevention rather than reaction to pest control problems.

#### REDUCING EXPOSURE TO OUTDOOR IRRITANTS

9. Bus Idling - School Board policy *EDDC, School Bus Idling*, shall be followed at all schools so as to prevent bus idling near buildings whenever possible.

## BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS SECURITY

It is the policy of the Morehouse Parish School Board that a concerted effort be made by the School Board and all personnel to provide for the security and protection of its students, employees, visitors, facilities, and equipment.

Security not only encompasses maintenance of secure (locked) buildings but other strategies to make the school environment safe, such as protection from fire hazards and faulty equipment and safe practices in the use of electrical, plumbing, and heating equipment.

Access to school buildings and any regularly locked areas on a school campus outside of school hours shall be limited to personnel whose work requires it. In order to guard against the potential of entrance to buildings by keys in the hands of unauthorized persons, an adequate key control system shall be established which shall limit access to buildings to authorized personnel.

Protective devices designed to be used as safeguards against illegal entry and vandalism shall be installed when appropriate to the individual situation. Employment of security personnel may be approved in situations where special risks are involved. The Superintendent shall be authorized to take strong measures within legal proscriptions to minimize vandalism and to recover damages from persons possibly vandalizing any School Board property, including school plants, grounds or integral parts thereof.

Records and funds shall be kept in a safe place and under lock and key when required. Money shall not be left in an unlocked safe at any time.

### FIREARM FREE ZONES

The areas surrounding the school campus or within 1,000 feet of any such school campus, or within a school bus, shall be designated *Firearm Free Zones*. It is unlawful for a student or non-student to intentionally possess a firearm, loaded or unloaded, on school property or within 1,000 feet of school property or while on a school bus, with limited exception as enumerated in La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §14:95.2. The School Board, in cooperation with local governmental agencies and the Louisiana Department of Education, shall designate and mark *Firearm Free Zones* which surround all schools and school property under the School Board's control.

### DRUG FREE ZONES

The area within 2,000 feet of any property used for school purposes by any school, or on a school bus, shall be designated as *Drug Free Zones*. It is unlawful for anyone to use, distribute, be under the influence of, manufacture or possess any controlled substances as defined by statute in a *Drug Free Zone*. The School Board, in cooperation with local

governmental agencies, and the Louisiana Department of Education, shall designate and mark *Drug Free Zones* which surround all schools and school property under the School Board's control.

#### ELECTRONIC TELECOMMUNICATION DEVICES

Except as may be allowed by another School Board policy, no student, unless authorized by the school principal or designee, shall use, possess, or operate any electronic telecommunication device including any facsimile system, radio paging service, mobile telephone service, intercom, or electromechanical paging system in any elementary or secondary school building, or on the grounds thereof while school is in session or in any school bus.

#### BODY ARMOR

It shall be unlawful and against School Board policy for any student or non-student to wear or possess on his/her person, at any time, body armor on any School Board property, school campus, at a school-sponsored function, on a school bus or other school transportation, or in a firearm free zone, with limited exception as enumerated in La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §14:95.9. School-sponsored functions shall include, but not be limited to, athletic competitions, dances, parties, or any extracurricular activities.

*Body armor* shall mean bullet-resistant metal or other material intended to provide protection from weapons or bodily injury.

The School Board shall post permanent notices of such prohibition at each major point of entry to the school.

#### SEARCH OF PERSONS OTHER THAN STUDENTS

Any school principal, administrator, teacher, or school security guards may search the person, book bag, briefcase, purse or other object in the possession of any person who is not a student enrolled in the school, or any school employee, while in or on school grounds. This search may be done randomly with a metal detector, or physically when there is reasonable suspicion that such person has any weapons, illegal drugs, alcohol, stolen goods, or objects in violation of School Board policy.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§14:95.2, 14:95.6, 14:95.9, 17:81, 17:239, 17:240, 17:405, 17:416.6.

## VANDALISM, THEFT, AND ARSON

The Morehouse Parish School Board recognizes that acts of vandalism, theft, and arson are crimes against the community. Every student, employee, and citizen of the parish is urged by the School Board to cooperate in reporting any incidents of vandalism, theft, and arson of property belonging to the School Board or of others while on School Board property, and provide the name(s) of the person or persons believed to be responsible.

The School Board declares that all acts of vandalism, theft, and arson of property belonging to the School Board or property contracted by the School Board shall be prosecuted to the fullest extent possible under the law. Rewards leading to arrests and convictions of vandals may be offered if authorized by the School Board.

Every effort shall be made to recover damages from adult vandals or from the parents of juvenile vandals to cover the theft of equipment or the destruction of school property. This shall apply not only to damage as a result of breaking and entering at nights or during other times school is not in session, but also to damage done to school property by pupils during the course of the school day, over and above normal wear and tear.

Every citizen of the parish, students, and members of law enforcement are urged by the School Board to cooperate in reporting any incidents of vandalism to property belonging to the School Board and the name(s) of the person(s) believed to be responsible. Employees of the School Board shall report to the principal of the school every incident of vandalism known to him/her, and, if known, the name(s) of those responsible. Principals shall forward reports to designated personnel.

The Superintendent shall be authorized to sign a criminal complaint and to press charges against perpetrators of vandalism against school property, and is further authorized to delegate to appropriate personnel, as he/she sees fit, authority to sign such complaints and to press charges.

Principals shall be authorized to suspend from school any pupil who cuts, defaces or injures any part of Morehouse Parish School Board school buildings or any property belonging to the School Board; or who writes any profane or obscene language or draws obscene pictures in or on any school material, or in or on any Morehouse Parish School Board property.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 17:416, 17:416.1.

## VIDEO/AUDIO MONITORING OF SCHOOL BOARD PROPERTY

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall authorize the use of School Board owned and/or installed video and audio cameras on any School Board property, buildings, or facilities and/or vehicles in an effort to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of all staff, students, and visitors to the school, and to safeguard School Board facilities and equipment.

The School Board shall notify employees, students, and/or visitors through appropriate methods that video monitoring/surveillance may occur on School Board property, in buildings and facilities, as well as campuses, parking lots, and school grounds belonging to, leased, or used by the School Board, or on any vehicle owned, leased, or used to transport students or for conduction of School Board business, or at any school sponsored event, activity, or function.

Notification shall also include the erection of clearly marked, written signs prominently displayed near the main entrance of school buildings, School Board property and facilities.

### INSTALLATION AND OPERATION OF EQUIPMENT

Video and audio cameras may be installed in identified public areas where monitoring/surveillance is deemed necessary as determined by the Superintendent or his/her designee, but placement shall not be allowed where students, employees, or the public has a reasonable expectation of privacy, such as inside locker rooms and adult and student restrooms.

Monitor/surveillance equipment installed in outdoor areas shall monitor only those areas designated and shall not be directed to look through windows of adjacent buildings or onto adjacent property, whenever possible. Video monitors (reception equipment) shall be located in strictly controlled access areas. Only authorized and designated personnel shall have access to the reception equipment and area and monitors shall not be located as to permit public viewing.

The use of video and audio monitoring/surveillance equipment on school grounds shall be supervised and controlled by the building administrator and/or his/her designee, in conjunction with the Superintendent and/or his/her designee. Video recordings made at the schools or other facilities shall be maintained by the building administrator. Video monitoring/surveillance equipment shall be operated on a twenty-four (24) hour, seven (7) day a week basis.

Staff personnel permitted access to the video and audio monitoring/surveillance system and equipment shall be required to follow all operational regulations and procedures developed in accordance with this policy. Staff and students shall be prohibited from unauthorized use, tampering with, or otherwise interfering with the placement or

and School Board policies related to the recording's maintenance and retention.

Video/audio recordings may be copied, distributed to, and viewed by public safety agencies, School Board safety and security personnel, the parish District Attorney, and/or appropriate law enforcement personnel, when approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee, or when subpoenaed for any court proceedings. Video recordings shall not be viewed by, copied, or released to any other person or agencies not referenced above except when specifically authorized by the Superintendent.

The provisions of this policy shall not affect a parent's or legal guardian's right to access video recordings from cameras in special education classrooms pursuant to La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:1948.

#### ACCESS TO PERSONAL INFORMATION

Generally, video and audio recordings made through the School Board's video monitoring/surveillance system shall not be considered public record. Access, however, to personal information contained in any recordings may be granted in whole or in part to an individual upon submission of a properly executed subpoena.

The School Board's surveillance and security video recordings shall not be considered "personally identifiable information" as defined by La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:3914.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 17:3914, 44:3.1.1.

## SCHOOL CAMPUS POINTS OF ENTRY

Principals shall be responsible for establishing procedures that shall protect instructional time and ensure the safety and welfare of students and staff. Each school shall clearly designate each main entrance and exit. Any other entrances/exits shall be at the discretion of the principal who is authorized to take the necessary steps to secure those entrances/exits.

The designated main entrance(s)/exit(s) and any other necessary entrances/exits shall be incorporated into each school's employee and student handbooks and regular and emergency campus procedures. A copy of the floor plan with the main entrance(s)/exit(s) and any other necessary entrances/exits clearly marked shall be provided to appropriate school personnel, emergency and law enforcement agencies, and also maintained in the principal's office.

Once the main entrance/exit and any other entrances/exits have been established, the principal and his/her staff must ensure that students, staff and visitors abide by this campus procedure. Furthermore, the principal shall take the necessary steps to ensure that all other entrances/exits, windows included, are secured through locking mechanisms that meet the fire codes for the buildings, but shall not obstruct egress.

In accordance with state law, no person is allowed on school grounds or in school buildings or facilities without authorization from the appropriate school official. Classroom doors shall remain locked during instructional time, but shall not obstruct egress.

Alarm systems shall be activated at the end of the school day and discontinued at appropriate times and in special circumstances by authorized personnel.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 17:416.16.

## ENERGY CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT

Good stewardship of public resources dictates that the Morehouse Parish School Board stress the efficient management and conservation of energy in schools and in all buildings and property. Every reasonable effort should be made to conserve energy and natural resources while exercising sound financial management. The Superintendent and administrative staff shall be responsible for developing, implementing, and monitoring strategies to improve energy consumption throughout the school system, as well as strategies dealing with energy awareness and conservation. Cost effective procedures for the reduction of energy use in school facilities and the assessment of such procedures related to the consumption of energy shall be continually monitored. The Superintendent shall recommend appropriate improvements in operations to enhance the conservation of energy.

Each principal shall be accountable for energy management on his/her campus with annual energy audits being conducted and conservation program outlines being updated. Judicious use of the various energy systems of each campus shall be the joint responsibility of the principal and head custodian to ensure that an efficient energy posture shall be maintained on a daily basis.

The student curriculum shall include strategies regarding energy conservation to ensure that every student participate in the energy management program as an *energy saver*.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.



## **SANITATION**

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall require the Maintenance Department and the principal of each school, to oversee the execution and enforcement of rules and regulations of the Sanitary Code, State of Louisiana Chapter XV, Schools and Public Buildings, and all other health laws governing the hygiene of the school and the premises of the school.

Each school will be inspected at least twice a year or at any other time when called upon by the Health Officer representing the State Board of Health and the State Department of Education. All school personnel shall be expected to give their full cooperation to the Health Officer.

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## **CLEANING PROGRAM**

It shall be the responsibility of the principal, working with his/her janitorial staff and the Maintenance Foreman, to keep all buildings, walks, and grounds in a clean and sanitary condition.

## MAINTENANCE OF SCHOOL BOARD PROPERTY

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall be responsible for the maintenance, repair, and care of any school site, building, facility or other property in the control of the School Board, including any unused school site. The School Board shall delegate responsibility to the Superintendent to properly maintain all such property. The Superintendent shall make sure that the care of such property complies with applicable laws, ordinances and regulations, including building and fire safety code regulations, until such property is sold, leased or otherwise disposed of by the School Board.

### LONG-RANGE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

A long-range maintenance program shall be developed on the basis of a continuing maintenance survey of all public school facilities in Morehouse Parish. Data collected shall be analyzed and evaluated in terms of present, continuing, and future needs for remodeling, renovation, and modernization. Job priorities and a schedule of work to be accomplished shall be maintained.

Quality control in terms of construction in the maintenance program done by maintenance employees of the School Board shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent or his/her designee. In construction programs where an architect is employed, quality control shall be the responsibility of the architect.

### REPAIRS

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall require requests for building repairs to be made through the school principal or building administrator by using work order request forms or making oral requests to the Superintendent or his/her designee. Requests for repair of hazardous conditions or of an emergency nature shall be reported to the Superintendent or his/her designee as soon as the condition requiring repair is identified. Hazardous and emergency requests shall be given priority consideration by the staff. Immediate remedial action shall be taken until proper services can eliminate the hazardous condition.

To provide for effective building maintenance and repairs, a logical and orderly means for requesting routine maintenance or repairs shall be as follows:

1. Requests may originate with individual employees, which shall be considered and approved by principal or building administrator.
2. Requests to the Maintenance Department shall be made through the local school principal or building administrator on forms prescribed by the Superintendent or his/her designee.
3. Principals or building administrators shall also submit requests for long-range

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maintenance repairs to the office of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Emergency requests for repairs involve situations which demand immediate correction for the school/site to continue operating without significant disruption. Principals/supervisors in these situations may telephone designated officials and request immediate service.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 17:87.6.

## EXEMPTIONS FROM PUBLIC RECORDS LAW

The public records law shall not be construed to require disclosure of records containing security procedures, criminal intelligence information pertaining to terrorist-related activity, or threat or vulnerability assessments related, collected, or obtained in the prevention of terrorist-related activity, including but not limited physical security information, proprietary information, operational plans, and the analysis of such information, or internal security information.

The public records law shall not be construed to require the disclosure of school crisis management and response plans.

The public records law shall not be construed to require disclosure of a blueprint or floor plan of the interior of a public school building or facility, except as required as part of the public bid process. Any blueprint or floor plan of the interior of a school building or facility provided as part of the public bid process shall be deemed confidential and shall not be disclosed to persons other than those responsible for the bidding or construction of the project. Any blueprint or floor plan of the interior of the school building or facility is not a "public record".

The public records law shall not be construed to require disclosure of any records, writings, plans, blueprints, or any information pertaining to security systems or features submitted to obtain a building permit on file in the office of a regulatory agency or official; any records, writings, plans, blueprints or information submitted to obtain a building permit which details the interior layout of a residence or public school building or facility particularly vulnerable to burglary or other criminal activity; or any records, writings, plans, blueprints, or information containing any property work product, design or plan of any architect or engineer submitted to obtain a building permit; however, this shall not be applicable to any survey or plot plan submitted solely for the purpose of displaying the outline of a building on a lot or lots of record in order to show compliance with setback requirements of a zoning ordinance or other such regulatory law.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§ 17:410.1; 44:3.1; 44:.4(40) and 44:1(A)(2)(c).

## EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES MANAGEMENT

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent and staff to ensure equivalence among schools in the provision of curriculum materials and instructional supplies. Any equipment and supply needs should be anticipated far enough in advance to allow sufficient time to order. Repair of equipment shall be handled through the Maintenance Department and returned to the school by delivery.

Janitorial supplies shall be requisitioned by each principal on a form furnished by the maintenance department. Any items not available for first time delivery shall be back ordered and sent at a later date.

Teaching supplies shall be handled in the same manner as janitorial supplies. Appropriate records shall be maintained for purchases of equipment and supplies by the School Board and/or each of the schools.

## AUTHORIZED USE OF EQUIPMENT

### SHARING OF EQUIPMENT BETWEEN PUBLIC ENTITIES

Notwithstanding any other provisions of law to the contrary, the Morehouse Parish School Board may share equipment with another public entity without having to expend funds for such use, provided that both entities have executed a *cooperative endeavor agreement* for the use of the equipment.

The cooperative endeavor agreement shall set forth in reasonable detail the obligations of the parties and shall:

1. Identify the equipment that will be shared.
2. Explain the use of the equipment and the approximate length of time for use of the equipment by the requesting public entity.
3. Address the responsibility for repairing or replacing the equipment when the equipment becomes inoperable for its intended use due to a mechanical or other breakdown while in the possession of the requesting public entity.
4. Include a hold harmless provision releasing the lending public entity from expenses, damages, or losses arising from the use of the equipment.

When an emergency situation is declared and public entities need to share equipment, the provisions above requiring a cooperative agreement shall not be required, provided the public entities share the equipment in good faith relative to the emergency situation.

### PERSONAL USE OF SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

It is the policy of the Morehouse Parish School Board that no School Board equipment shall be removed or taken home for personal use. Any employee who has a need to take equipment home or to another site for school-related purposes shall obtain written permission from his/her principal, supervisor, or Superintendent. A copy of the approval shall be maintained on file in the appropriate office for three (3) years. Equipment used in this manner shall be returned to its assigned work location immediately upon completion of usage and the date of return shall be noted on the approval form.

### LOANING OF SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

Principals may approve the loaning of items such as tables, chairs, and non-depreciating items to outside school organizations or groups that may be sponsoring a school-related activity on or away from the school campus.

The proper form shall be completed and kept at the school site specifying: item(s)

borrowed, date item(s) borrowed, number of each item borrowed, signature of person receiving item(s), date item(s) returned, and signature of person verifying item(s) returned.

#### TRANSFER OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

When an employee leaves a work site, either through transfer, resignation, or retirement, only personal property items belonging to the employee may be taken from his/her work site. Materials and equipment purchased with School Board or school funds shall remain at the site for which they were purchased.

In the case of items of technology, the building administrator shall inquire to the School Board's Technology Department to determine transfer eligibility for these items. The nature of funding source along with the scope of the project used to obtain this equipment shall determine whether or not certain items may be transferred to another School Board site along with the employee.

In any case, the employee must seek the permission of the building administrator before removing any materials from the site. As usual, should any item be transferred to any other site, the proper disposition sheet(s) shall be completed and forwarded to the inventory specialist for accountability.

Additionally, equipment and/or supplies purchased or fabricated and donated by auxiliary and/or support organizations become the property of the Morehouse Parish School Board and are therefore governed by this policy.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 33:4712.18.



## EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall be responsible for the maintenance, repair, and care of any School Board property, including equipment and other moveable property, in the control of the School Board. The School Board shall delegate responsibility to the Superintendent to properly maintain all such property and see that it is in good, safe, working order. The Superintendent shall make sure that the care of such property complies with applicable laws, ordinances and regulations, including building and fire safety code regulations.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:87.6.

## STUDENT TRANSPORTATION MANAGEMENT

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall provide eligible students school transportation services which shall meet the objectives of safety, efficiency, adequacy, and economy. Through the use of publicly and privately owned buses, the School Board shall maintain a student transportation program that shall conform to or exceed minimum standards as set forth by pertinent statutes and the Louisiana Department of Education. It shall be unlawful for the School Board to permit the transport at one time a number of children on a school bus that exceeds the number of seats available on that bus.

All vehicles, owned by, rented, or leased to the School Board, to owner-operators, or to contract bus operators, shall carry evidence of insurance and be registered, marked, and equipped according to law. Owner-operators or contract bus operators who purchase their own insurance shall be required to annually submit to the Superintendent or his/her designee proof of proper and valid insurance coverage prior to any usage of the bus, but not later than August 1 of each year. Should any coverage aspects or insurance policy provisions change during the year, the bus owner shall notify the Superintendent or his/her designee immediately, but no later than twenty-four (24) hours of receipt of notification. All insurance policies of any owner-operators or contract bus operators shall include an endorsement naming the Morehouse Parish School Board additional insured and that the policy may not be cancelled for any reason except after thirty (30) days prior notice to the School Board. Insurance purchased shall be at an amount set by the School Board.

All school buses used to transport students shall be driven by personnel who possess a current and valid *Commercial Driver's License* (CDL) with proper endorsements, and have completed state required pre-service certification training and in-service driving requirements in accordance with provisions outlined in *Louisiana School Transportation Specifications and Procedures*, Bulletin 119. All school bus operators, including owner-operators and contract bus operators, shall be required to personally operate the school bus assigned or owned, except in the case of illness or emergency. In such cases, a qualified substitute shall be assigned by the Superintendent or designee.

The management of student transportation throughout the school district shall be the responsibility of the Director of Transportation, acting under the authority of the Superintendent. He/she shall assure that the school transportation system is operated in accordance with all state and federal laws and regulations.

### SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The use of any van (cargo or passenger) in any capacity for the purpose of transporting students to and from any school-related activity shall be prohibited. However, the use of Multifunction School Activity Buses (MFSAB) is allowed for transporting students to activities. Although classified as buses, they may not be used for transporting students between home and school bus stops.

## INSPECTIONS

All buses and other vehicles used primarily for the transportation of students shall be inspected by the assigned driver and the Superintendent or his/her designee on a regular basis. All school vehicles shall be inspected a minimum of twice a year, once during June, July, or August, and certified as safe prior to the beginning of the school session, and once during December, January, or February of each school year, by an approved Louisiana Motor Vehicle Inspection Station. Buses fifteen (15) years of age or older shall be inspected more frequently than other buses to assure effectiveness of operation and safety of students. No bus shall be operated without a proper inspection tag certifying that a bus has met or exceeded minimum safety standards.

## BUS PURCHASES

It is the policy of the Morehouse Parish School Board that any used school bus purchased for use in the school system shall meet current Louisiana statutory requirements for motor vehicles, and shall meet *Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards* and any additional state-required specifications for school buses that were in effect on the date the vehicle was manufactured. All bus purchases shall require prior approval of the School Board.

School buses used to transport students, including activity and backup buses, shall not be more than twenty-five (25) years old. All newly purchased or replacement school buses, at the time they are acquired by the owner and placed in service, shall be ten (10) or less model years old. The number of years shall be reckoned from the date of introduction of the model year. This shall apply to buses purchased by veteran owners/operators; by newly hired owners/operators, and by the School Board, individual schools, booster clubs, etc., and by individuals or companies with whom contracts have been entered into for the purposes of transporting children to and from school and school-related activities and for use as spare buses.

When a new or pre-owned bus is purchased or the ownership of a bus is transferred, or when an individual or a company enters into a contractual agreement with the School Board, the owner shall assure that the bus is in compliance with all requirements contained in applicable federal and state laws and state and school district regulations. All buses so purchased shall be required to satisfactorily pass all mandated inspections prior to any usage.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:158, 17:158.1, 17:158.2, 17:158.3, 17:158.4, 17:158.5, 17:158.6, 17:158.7, 17:159, 17:159.1, 17:159.2, 17:160, 17:161, 17:162, 17:163, 17:164, 17:165, 17:166, 17:492, 32:293, 32:378; Olive Morgan v. Livingston Parish School Board, First Circuit Court of Appeals, March 1991; Louisiana School Transportation Specifications and Procedures, Bulletin 119, Louisiana Department of Education.

## STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES

The Morehouse Parish School Board recognizes that there are times in which private vehicles are used to transport students to and from school sponsored events. The School Board directs that such transportation services shall only be utilized in emergency situations as authorized by the principal. Otherwise, proper student transportation, i.e., School Board owned or operated vehicles, shall be used. Except for the use of Multifunction School Activity Buses (MFSAB), the use of any van, either cargo or passenger, in any capacity, for the purpose of transporting students to or from any school-related activity shall be strictly prohibited.

With the exception of Special Education students that have approval for reimbursable transportation by their parents, transportation in personal vehicles shall only be allowed in emergency or unique situations where the use of a personal vehicle is the only alternative available. When private vehicles are to be used to transport students, such vehicles shall be chosen in advance of the anticipated usage, whenever possible. On such rare occasion that a personal vehicle is approved for transportation of students, the following requirements shall be met:

1. The driver of the vehicle shall be restricted to a teacher, school administrator, other authorized school employee, parent or legal guardian with a minimum age of twenty-five (25) years.
2. All students shall have written permission from a parent or legal guardian to travel with the group.
3. The number of students transported shall not exceed the capacity of the vehicle.
4. A photocopy of a valid driver's license of the driver(s) and insurance card of the vehicle shall be taken and held by the school personnel. Insurance coverage shall be no less \$25,000 per person, \$50,000 per accident, \$10,000 property damage. It shall also be documented that the driver of the vehicle and the vehicle's owner are aware that their insurance is the first line of defense in the event of an accident.
5. The Morehouse Parish School Board Personal Vehicle Transportation Form shall be completed and signed by the driver/owner of the vehicle and the school administrator prior to use of the vehicle.
6. The following items shall be visually checked and certified by the school administrator prior to use:
  - A. Seating capacity is sufficient and seatbelts are available for all occupants.
  - B. Vehicle appears to be in good condition and proper working order.
  - C. Taillights, brake lights and signal lights work properly.

- D. Tires are in good shape and are not bald; dry rotted, damaged, etc.
- E. Under no circumstances shall students be allowed to ride in the back of pickup truck.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.

## RESPONSIBILITY FOR VEHICLE OPERATION

### BOARD-OWNED OR LEASED VEHICLES

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall require that **only** authorized employees with valid drivers' licenses be allowed to operate and drive vehicles owned or leased by the School Board. *Authorized employees* shall be those employees whom the school system has authorized to drive School Board-owned or leased vehicles after having their driving records and insurance qualifications examined for acceptability by School Board staff.

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall require the highest possible standards of safety of its employees in the operation of vehicles owned, operated, or leased by or on behalf of the School Board. Every employee shall observe all laws as well as School Board policies, administrative regulations and procedures governing the use, care and operation of vehicles. Accordingly, no person may be hired or employed for any position which includes duties involving the operation of a School Board owned or leased vehicle who has a motor vehicle record with violations for driving while intoxicated or under the influence, leaving the scene of an accident, or other serious motor vehicle violations, nor whose driver's license is suspended.

### DRIVER TRAINING

All transportation, food service and maintenance personnel who regularly drive Morehouse Parish School Board vehicles shall be required to attend a driving refresher course annually. This training shall consist of a minimum of four (4) hours and shall cover items pertaining to safe vehicle operation, defensive driving, vehicle use policies and other related subject matter. The training shall be scheduled and a roster of attendees maintained by the Transportation Department. School bus operators are not included in this training segment since their training is dictated by federal and state regulations and is covered elsewhere.

The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall maintain pertinent administrative regulations and procedures governing the use, care, and operation of any School Board vehicle.

### ARRESTS OR CITATIONS FOR MOTOR VEHICLE VIOLATIONS

A *school bus operator* shall report his/her arrest for violation of any law or local ordinance that prohibits operating a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or any abused substance or controlled dangerous substance set forth in the drug schedules enumerated in La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §40:964. *School bus operator* shall mean **any** employee or contract operator of the School Board whose duty is to transport students in any school bus or activity bus to and from school or to and from any school-related activity.

The report shall be made by the operator to the Superintendent or his/her designee. Such report shall be made within twenty-four (24) hours of the arrest or prior to the operator next reporting for his/her work assignment as a school bus operator, whichever time period is shorter. Such report shall be made by the school bus operator regardless of who owns or leases the vehicle being driven at the time of the offense for which the operator was arrested and regardless of whether the operator was performing an official duty or responsibility at the time of the offense.

A school bus operator who fails to report his/her arrest for violations of operating a vehicle as noted above shall be terminated by the School Board if the operator is serving a probationary term of employment, or shall be subject to removal as provided for by state law if the operator is tenured. If the bus operator is tenured, written and signed charges alleging such failure to report violations shall be brought against the bus operator.

Any School Board employee in any position which includes duties involving the operation of a School Board owned or leased vehicle, or operating a private vehicle, at any time, shall report by telephone and in writing to the Superintendent or his/her designee, any citation, summons, or arrest for driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol, driving while intoxicated, leaving the scene of an accident, driving while license is suspended, or other serious motor vehicle violations. Such report shall be required whether the usage is of a district owned or leased vehicle or a personal/private vehicle. Failure to report any such violations within twenty-four (24) hours after any arrest or citation shall be a violation of this policy and subject the employee to discipline including the possible termination of employment. All reports to the Superintendent or his/her designee shall be forwarded to the personnel office for review as to any possible disciplinary action and reporting to the School Board's insurer. If denied coverage by the insurer, an employee may be terminated.

In the event a citation, summons or arrest involves the operation of a School Board owned or leased vehicle, the driving privileges of an employee may be immediately removed. For an employee whose primary duty is the driving of a School Board owned or leased vehicle, the employee may be suspended by the School Board with or without pay, or terminated if the violation results in conviction, in accordance with School Board policy.

#### MOTOR VEHICLE DRIVING RECORD

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall, at a minimum of twice a year, submit a list of employees who drive School Board-owned or leased vehicles, as well as any employee whose duties require the use of a School Board or privately owned vehicle in the course and scope of their responsibilities, to the Louisiana Department of Motor Vehicles for verification of driving records and for updating information provided to the insurer.

If a driver has been a resident of Louisiana for less than seven (7) years, a motor vehicle record review shall be conducted for **all** prior states of residence going back seven (7) years.

In addition:

1. Any driving while intoxicated (DWI) conviction or refusal to submit to a lawful field sobriety test shall result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension of School Board driving privileges.
2. An employee whose driver's license has been suspended for any reason shall not be allowed to operate any vehicle in the performance of his/her employment.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§14:32.1, 14:32.8, 14:39.2, 14:98, 14:98.1, 14:98.2, 14:98.3, 14:100, 17:81, 17:491, 17:492, 17:491.3, 17:493; Louisiana School Transportation Specifications and Procedures, Bulletin 119, Louisiana Department of Education.



## USE OF PRIVATE VEHICLES FOR SCHOOL BOARD BUSINESS

### AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY COVERAGE

The Morehouse Parish School Board recognizes that employees may need to use their own vehicles for business related travel. In order to receive reimbursement for travel expenses, employees shall be required to maintain adequate automobile liability insurance in limits stipulated by the School Board. Verification of such coverage shall be submitted to the School Board in order to be eligible for School Board reimbursement of travel expenses.

In addition, employees who drive their personal vehicles for business related travel shall be subject to periodic reviews by School Board personnel of their motor vehicle driving records.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 32:861, 32:862, 32:863, 32:864, 32:865, 32:900.

## TRANSPORTATION SAFETY PROGRAM

The Morehouse Parish School Board recognizes the responsibility of all employees who drive while on School Board business, school bus owners-operators and contract bus operators, as well as all other bus operators to practice extreme caution while driving, especially in transporting children to and from school. All operators under the jurisdiction of the School Board shall be morally and legally responsible to conduct himself/herself at all times in the discharge of his/her duties in such a manner that every precaution can be taken to afford maximum protection for themselves and the children they may transport. Therefore, the School Board shall require the implementation, maintenance, and observance of a transportation safety program.

### BUS INSPECTIONS REQUIRED BY STATE

All buses and other vehicles used primarily for the transportation of students shall be inspected by the assigned operator and the Superintendent or his/her designee on a regular basis. All school vehicles shall be inspected a minimum of twice a year, once during June, July, or August, and certified as safe prior to the beginning of the school session, and once during December, January, or February of each school year, by an approved Louisiana Motor Vehicle Inspection Station. Buses fifteen (15) years of age or older shall be inspected more frequently than other buses to assure effectiveness of operation and safety of students. No bus shall be operated without a proper inspection tag certifying that a bus has met or exceeded minimum safety standards.

### Daily Trip Inspections

Before beginning, during, and after completing each assigned route, trip, or individual run daily, all bus operators shall conduct pre-trip, en route, and post-trip inspections of the vehicle and its special equipment to check for passengers, special equipment, medication, etc. that may have been left on the bus. Before the bus operator exits the bus after any trip or individual run, the bus operator shall immediately perform a post-trip inspection of the interior of the bus for children or other passengers that may have remained on the bus. The bus operator shall employ any means necessary to check for children who may be under seats. The bus operator shall also check for damage to seats, and articles left on the bus. Failure to check for children or other objects left on the bus may result in discipline of the bus operator, up to and including termination.

### ACCIDENTS

Any employee, owner-operator or contract bus operator, or anyone driving School Board owned, leased, or rented vehicles involved in an accident, regardless of the damage, while driving such a vehicle shall report the accident to the Transportation Supervisor immediately following the accident or as soon thereafter as practicable and follow all applicable administrative regulations and procedures for reporting accidents. Any part of the vehicle rubbing, scraping, or touching (other than buses, overhanging limbs, etc.)

other objects or vehicles in such a manner to cause damage to the vehicle or other objects constitutes an accident.

The School Board shall require any bus operator or employee with a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) ticketed for suspicion of driving while intoxicated (DWI) to be suspended. Any operator or other employee with a CDL who is convicted of DWI or has their license revoked shall be terminated immediately. All citations issued to any bus operator including but not limited to leaving the scene of an accident or driving with a suspended license must be reported to the Superintendent or his/her designee prior to the next scheduled bus route, and must be followed by a written notification to the Superintendent or his/her designee within three (3) working days. Failure to report a traffic citation shall constitute breach of contract and may result in grounds for termination.

#### USE OF CELLULAR TELEPHONES

The School Board may authorize the issuance of cellular telephones to bus operators. However, no person shall engage in a call on a cellular telephone or similar device while driving a school bus. The use of cellular telephones by school bus operators may be authorized in an emergency situation involving:

1. An emergency system response operator, 911 safety dispatcher, or school administrator;
2. A hospital or emergency room;
3. A physician's office or health clinic;
4. An ambulance or fire department rescue service;
5. A fire department, fire protection district, or volunteer fire department;
6. A law enforcement agency.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 17:491.2, 17:492, 32:289, 32:398, 32:871; Louisiana School Transportation Specifications and Procedures, Bulletin 119, Louisiana Department of Education.

## **CARPOOL AND BUS LINE SAFETY**

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall require safety rules for carpool and bus lines at any school that includes any of the grades kindergarten through five. The safety rules shall require, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Students shall remain a safe distance from the pick-up area behind something material or immaterial intended to block passage, as deemed appropriate for the particular school building.
2. Students shall wait in the pick-up area and wait for vehicles to come to a complete stop.
3. A student being dropped off shall remain in the appropriate passenger restraint until the vehicle in which he/she is a passenger comes to a complete stop.
4. A student in grades kindergarten through three shall be accompanied by a school employee while he/she is walking to and from a pick-up area.

New policy: September 5, 2023

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81; Board minutes, 9-5-23.

## SCHOOL BUS SCHEDULING AND ROUTING

The Morehouse Parish School District shall provide school bus transportation for all students living more than one mile from the school that they are assigned to attend. Students living within one mile of the school may be allowed to ride a school bus when the School District determines that conditions exist to warrant such transportation. Other students may be provided with school bus transportation in accordance with regulations of the Louisiana Department of Education.

A reasonable time shall be established for each route and the bus operator shall be expected to adhere to this schedule. By the same token, students shall be expected to be at their respective bus stop when the bus arrives. Once a bus route has been established, the bus operator shall not alter or change assigned routes without order of the Supervisor of Transportation. Any bus operator who feels a road is unsafe or dangerous shall report such dangerous condition to the Superintendent or his/her designee, and the bus operator may be allowed not to travel the road with the prior approval of the Supervisor of Transportation, until the Superintendent or his/her designee determines said road is safe or improved, or the situation has been rectified.

Buses must be routed so that no more than one bus will travel the same route, except in cases of definite apparent necessity. Each scheduled route will be planned in full consideration of the established limits for individual schools.

During inclement weather, bus operators may make more frequent stops.

### LOADING AND UNLOADING OF STUDENTS

The loading and unloading of students onto and from school buses being utilized to transport students shall be conditional on the following:

1. Bus operators shall be prohibited from loading or unloading students at school while the bus is in a traffic lane of any type of street as defined in state law and require that students be loaded or unloaded on a shoulder, in a school parking lot, or at other appropriate off-road location at the school as determined by the School District. This requirement shall not apply if the shoulder of a municipal road is the only available alternative and the municipality has not made the shoulder available by designating that area for loading and unloading students during designated school zone hours.
2. Bus operators shall be prohibited from loading or unloading students at or near their homes while the bus is in a lane of traffic unless the bus is in the lane farthest to the right side of the road so that there is not a lane of traffic between the bus and the right-side curb or other edge of the road.

3. Bus operators shall be prohibited from loading or unloading a student in a location on a divided highway such that a student, in order to walk between the bus and his/her home or school, would be required to cross a roadway of the highway on which traffic is not controlled by the visual signals on the school bus.

*Street or highway* means the entire width between the boundary lines of every way or place of whatever nature publicly maintained and open to the use of the public for the purpose of vehicular travel, including bridges, causeways, tunnels, and ferries.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:158, 32:1.

## SPECIAL USE OF SCHOOL BUSES

### SCHOOL BOARD RELATED BUS USE

It shall be the policy of the Morehouse Parish School Board to permit the use of school buses for student trips or excursions to enhance instructional activities. The use of buses for such trips shall be strictly governed by regulations adopted by the School Board and/or established by the Superintendent or administrative staff. All arrangements for any trip or excursion shall be made by either the transportation supervisor or the Superintendent.

Any School Board owned or operated school or organization may use buses for athletic or activity trips. The School Board shall be reimbursed by the school or organization the expense equal to the cost of operation of the buses for the particular event. In addition, the following guidelines shall also apply to the special use of any school bus:

1. For activities of an educational nature within the parish, the use of the buses shall be requested by the principal of the school involved and it shall be limited in time so as not to interfere with the regular route to which that bus is assigned.
2. For educational activities outside the parish, the use of the buses shall be limited to transporting those students who are engaged in representing their school in the principal activity for which the trip is required. The request shall also come from the principal involved.
3. Approval for the use of the buses shall be requested at a time prior to the trip sufficient for the office staff to evaluate the request and to make the arrangements necessary. All buses on all occasions shall be driven by a person with a commercial driver's license with the appropriate designation and certified by Morehouse Parish School Board. The principal of the school involved shall be held responsible for seeing that the above condition is met.

### NON-SCHOOL BOARD RELATED BUS USAGE

Due to legal constraints and insurance requirements private and parochial schools and or non-profit school organizations residing within Morehouse Parish may only be permitted to use Morehouse Parish School Board's buses upon written application to the Director of Transportation and approval by the Superintendent or his/her designee. Non-School Board users shall employ drivers certified by the State of Louisiana and the School Board. The Superintendent is charged herein to ensure that all costs of these transactions are recouped by the School Board in accordance with the State Constitution and Louisiana Revised Statutes. In addition to the prescribed, the School Board shall require the following:

1. Application for use of the School Board's school buses shall be submitted through the Director of Transportation and approved by the Superintendent and or designee on a first come, first serve basis at least forty-eight hours (48 hrs.) prior to the anticipated use.
2. Only school pupils, school personnel and school approved chaperones shall be permitted to ride the bus during this "special use".
3. All organizations requesting and using the School Board's buses under this section shall provide the following information attached to a trip request;
  - A. Certificate of Auto Liability Insurance evidencing "hired and non-owned" coverage,
  - B. Certificate shall name Morehouse Parish School Board as additional insured under that policy and minimum limits of one million dollars, combined single limit.
4. Any use not directly related to Morehouse Parish School Board business shall be charged at a rate set by the School Board.

Emergency situations shall be addressed by the Transportation Director with the verbal or written approval of the Superintendent or his/her designee. In accord with best practices, the use shall be documented and recovery of costs to immediately follow the trip. Private and parochial schools should project their needs and make prior arrangements (insurance certificates on file) with the Superintendent or his/her designee so as to be approved prior to the emergency need.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 17:158.



## AUTHORIZED PASSENGERS

The Morehouse Parish School Board directs that students shall not be allowed to ride to and from school on any bus other than the one to which they have been assigned to ride, except for legitimate reasons which shall be verified by appropriate school administrators. To ride a different bus, or to leave the bus at a different location than the student's regular stop, the student shall be required to submit written permission from the student's parent or legal guardian and have prior approval of the principal of the school where the student attends. The principal shall inform the bus operator of the student's destination and stop. Approval of the request shall be predicated on the availability of adequate seating accommodations on the school bus.

A telephone call from the parent/guardian to the local school administrator (principal or assistant principal) regarding the need for the student to change buses may be accepted but only in an extreme emergency. If the presence of the additional student causes an overloading situation on the alternate bus, the student shall not be allowed to change from the original bus.

No one other than students shall be allowed to ride buses to and from school. With the exception of school personnel and chaperones, adults shall not be permitted to ride buses to any authorized school activity, such as athletic events, band concerts, etc, unless it is a school bus which has been designated as a bus for fans.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.

## SCHOOL BUS IDLING

### APPLICABILITY

This policy shall apply to the operation of every Morehouse Parish School Board-owned and/or contracted school bus.

### RATIONALE

Diesel exhaust from idling school buses can accumulate in and around the bus and pose a health risk to children, drivers and the community at large. Exposure to diesel exhaust can cause lung damage and respiratory problems. Diesel exhaust also exacerbates asthma and existing allergies, and long-term exposure is thought to increase the risk of lung cancer. Idling buses also waste fuel and financial resources. The exhaust from buses idling pollutes the air around and inside the bus and possibly inside the school building if the exhaust gets into heating and ventilating systems. Diesel exhaust contains small particles that can penetrate deep into the lungs to cause lung damage, respiratory problems, and exacerbate asthma and allergies. Diesel exhaust contains smog-forming and toxic air pollutants, some of which may be classified as carcinogens by the EPA and other organizations. Children are more susceptible to the pollution because they breathe fifty percent (50%) more air per pound of body weight than adults and their respiratory systems are still developing.

### PURPOSE

Eliminate all unnecessary idling by Morehouse Parish School Board school buses such that idling time is minimized in all aspects of school bus operation.

### GUIDANCE

1. It is recommended that all school buses, upon entering the school grounds, go directly to the designated school bus parking area. Once parked, the engine should be immediately shut off and passengers disembarked (following all safety protocols for unloading passengers). The school bus engine should not be idling to load passengers. On the return trip, the school bus engine should only be started once all passengers are safely loaded and the bus has a direct path to exit the campus.
2. When school bus drivers arrive at loading or unloading areas to drop off or pick up passengers, they should turn off their buses as soon as possible to eliminate idling time and reduce harmful emissions. The school bus should not be restarted until it is ready to depart and there is a clear path to exit the pick-up area. Exceptions include conditions that would compromise passenger safety, such as:
  - A. Extreme weather conditions

**B. Idling in traffic**

3. At school bus depots, limit the idling time during early morning warm-up to what is recommended by the manufacturer (generally 3-5 minutes) in all but the coldest weather.
4. Bus engine should not be started until all students have completely boarded the bus when participating in field trips, extracurricular activities or other events where students are transported off school grounds.
5. In colder weather, schools are directed to provide a space inside the school where bus drivers who arrive early can wait.
6. In colder weather, if the warmth of the bus is an issue, idling is to be at a very minimum and occur outside the school zone. The "warmed" bus is to enter the school zone as close to pick-up time as possible to maintain warmth and then shut down.
7. All service delivery vehicles shall turn off the engines while making deliveries to school buildings.
8. All drivers shall receive a copy of this bulletin at the beginning of every school year.
9. A copy of this policy shall be provided upon request at all times.

## **MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR OF VEHICLES**

All Morehouse Parish School Board vehicles are to be maintained in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations. Preventive maintenance schedules are input into an automated maintenance program and weekly printouts are forwarded to the Bus Shop Foreman to assure preventive maintenance work items are performed. Work orders for repairs shall also be issued from the automated maintenance program. Maintenance and repairs to vehicles shall be input into the program upon completion of work for documentation purposes. In addition to maintenance and repairs, work orders shall be issued to the Bus Shop Foreman to assure that the annual state vehicle inspections are accomplished.

## CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The Morehouse Parish School Board believes the school district should have a sound child nutrition program and that the child nutrition program should be an integral part of the total educational program. The School Board also believes that the highest possible sanitation standards should be maintained and that every effort should be made to make it possible for every child to participate in the child nutrition program without regard to race, color, disability, national origin, sex, or age.

### GUIDELINES

Consequently, the School Board shall administer a *Food and Child Nutrition Program* in accordance with federal and state standards and requirements as outlined by the Louisiana Department of Education, including that only products that have met all state certification requirements shall be utilized in child nutrition facilities. Uniform school lunch and breakfast menus shall be established for the schools with the provisions that a cafeteria may, in addition to the uniform lunch, serve an additional menu to provide a choice for pupils. Menus shall conform to USDA requirements and those of the *Division of Nutrition Assistance*, Louisiana Department of Education.

The School Board, as the recognized child nutrition program authority for the school district, shall annually approve the national school lunch program, school breakfast program, U.S.D.A school commodity programs and any other related programs. The approved agreement shall meet all specifications mandated by the Louisiana Department of Education's *Division of Nutrition Assistance*.

Guidelines of the *Louisiana Sanitary Code* shall be strictly followed in the preparation, serving, and cleaning of all child nutrition programs and facilities.

Each school shall abide by state and federal guideline restrictions on the operation of concessions, canteens, snack bars, vending machines or other food and beverage sales or class parties. (Refer to policy JGB, *School Wellness*)

No supplies or foods, including leftovers, shall be removed from the child nutrition department by any employee of the school system unless he/she has been authorized to transfer the items to another school location. Disciplinary action may result for unauthorized food removal.

Regulations prohibit the denial of any meals as disciplinary action to any child in attendance at school. Denying meals to students for disciplinary reasons associated with disruptive behavior in the cafeteria, selling or loaning free or reduced-price meal badges or barcodes, etc. is prohibited under Federal regulations. Disciplinary action used for other unacceptable behavior should be applied in these situations.

### SPECIAL EVENTS/USE OF CAFETERIA

Special events should not interfere with the preparation and service of school lunch, breakfasts, or snacks. School functions involving the use of the cafeteria shall be arranged through the principal and approved by the Supervisor of Child Nutrition. Whenever the cafeteria is used by the school, one or more of the child nutrition employees shall be in charge to ensure control over child nutrition foods and to ensure proper use and care of equipment and facilities. A *Special Event* form must be completed and sent to the Supervisor of Child Nutrition at least two (2) weeks in advance of the event. Events that occur at scheduled times during the school year can be handled by sending in one notice listing all of the dates.

Ref: 42 USC 1751 et seq. (*School Lunch Programs*); 42 USC 1771 et seq. (*Child Nutrition*); 7 CFR 210 (*National School Lunch Program*); 7 CFR 220 (*School Breakfast Program*); La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:82, 17:191, 17:192, 17:192.1, 17:193, 17:194, 17:195, 17:196, 17:197, 17:197.1, 17:198, 17:199, 39:2101, 40.4; Louisiana Sanitary Code, Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals.

## INTERNET SAFETY AND DISTRICT NETWORK USE

The Morehouse Parish School Board recognizes the role of educational technologies in stimulating innovative approaches to teaching and learning and shifting the way educators and students access and transmit information, share ideas, and contact others. In addition, technology is a key component in transacting the business of the system and School Board. The connection of schools and offices to the global online community brings new responsibilities as well as opportunities.

Network resources and technology are provided for educational purposes and to carry out the legitimate business of the School Board. The term *educational purposes* includes classroom instruction activities and assignments, directed student research, interpersonal communication, professional development, collaborative projects, and the work of School Board offices, departments, and schools. The School Board expects all employees, students, School Board members, and any other users, who use computing and network resources of the School Board, including electronic mail and telecommunications tools, to apply them in appropriate ways to the performance of responsibilities associated with their positions and assignments.

The Superintendent shall be responsible for establishing appropriate guidelines, rules, regulations, and procedures for exploring and using Internet resources within the school district to enhance learning and teaching activities. Acceptable use of these resources shall be consistent with the philosophy, goals, and objectives of the Morehouse Parish School Board.

### INTERNET SAFETY

In compliance with the *Children's Internet Protection Act*, the School Board shall use a technology protection measure that blocks and/or filters Internet access to Internet sites which contain harmful materials or information, such as sites that contain obscene, pornographic, pervasively vulgar, excessively violent, or sexually harassing material or information, or sites that may contain information on the manufacturing of bombs or incendiary devices. The technology protection measure that blocks and/or filters Internet access may be disabled by an authorized individual for bona fide research purposes with the permission of the Superintendent or authorized designee(s). This disabling is permissible only for a student seventeen (17) years of age or older or an authorized employee for the purpose as stated.

The network and Internet user shall be held responsible for his/her actions and activities. Responsibilities include efficient, ethical and legal utilization of network resources.

As a matter of public law, any document pertaining to the public business on a publicly funded system is a public record, and this law applies to records stored on district computers, file servers, and email and other data storage systems.

### INTERNET USAGE

Any use of the Internet that adversely affects its operation in pursuit of teaching and learning or jeopardizes its use or performance for other community members is prohibited and may result in loss of Internet privileges, suspension or other appropriate disciplinary action. The provisions of this policy shall also apply to the use of private e-mail accounts when access is attained using School Board equipment or networks and to access attained through any authorized personal digital device while on School Board property. The Morehouse Parish School Board shall not condone the use of the Internet for any illegal or inappropriate activities and shall not be responsible for any such use by staff or students.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

Faculty and staff use of School Board technology equipment, device and or network resources shall be reserved for educational purposes and the conducting of business aspects of the School Board. All personnel using school computers or a computer network located on school property, or computers accessing the Internet shall be accountable for their use. Teacher or class files on the network shall be treated as School Board property subject to control and inspection by School Board personnel. Access codes or passwords shall be kept on file in a secured location by appropriate administrators in case an inspection is warranted. Use of the Internet, the School Board's network resources, and/or any computers shall be considered a privilege and any inappropriate use may result in appropriate disciplinary action and loss of privileges to use any technology equipment or resources.

The School Board does not condone any illegal or inappropriate activities and shall not be responsible for such use by staff. The School Board does not guarantee the right to use the Internet and reserves the right to suspend or terminate the privilege of any individual at its sole discretion without notice, cause, or reason. Failure to adhere to pertinent policies and/or regulations may result in the loss of computer privileges, access to the Internet and electronic mail account and may result in further disciplinary action up to and including termination. Furthermore, any activity that may be in violation of local, state, or federal laws shall be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Access to the information resources infrastructure, sharing of information, and security of intellectual products, all require that each and every user accept responsibility to protect the rights of the community. Any materials or files, such as, but not limited to, lesson plans, schedules, letters, memos, documents, programs, spreadsheets, databases, and/or presentations created with Morehouse Parish School Board equipment and/or facilities, or during periods for which the employee is compensated by the School Board becomes the intellectual property of Morehouse Parish School Board. Any employee of the School Board who, without authorization, accesses, uses, destroys, alters, dismantles or disfigures any School Board information technologies, properties or facilities, including those owned by third parties, thereby threatens the atmosphere of increased access and sharing of information, threatens the security within which members of the School Board's technology network may create intellectual products and maintain records, and has



engaged in unethical and unacceptable behavior.

Users shall be responsible for the content of e-mail messages in their account. E-mail is not a confidential medium for transmitting personal messages, and as such is viewed as public information. School Board administrators may at any time review communications to maintain integrity system-wide and ensure that staff members are using the system responsibly. The School Board shall have access to all e-mail, which may be routinely and randomly checked. Inappropriate or profane messages, as well as messages that disrupt the educational and administrative goals of the School Board may result in loss of privileges and/or disciplinary action. Messages relating to, or in support of, illegal activities may be reported to the appropriate authorities. The School Board shall cooperate fully with any local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to any mail transmitted on School Board computers.

An employee who encounters a problem with a School Board computer, the School Board's network or his/her assigned e-mail accounts, shall immediately report the problem to the Superintendent or his/her designee. Anyone witnessing an employee or student abusing a School Board computer and/or the School Board's network shall report such information immediately to the Superintendent or his/her designee.

#### UNAUTHORIZED AND ILLEGAL USE

While using School Board computers and the technology network, faculty and staff may not be under direct supervision, but shall abide by School Board policy and administrative regulations and procedures governing the use of School Board computers and the School Board's technology network.

Tampering with selection menus, procedures, or icons for the purpose of misleading or confusing other users shall be prohibited. Any use by any person of School Board technology resources that incurs expenses to the school other than the monthly user fees and rates shall be strictly prohibited. Furthermore, the computer system shall not be used for commercial, political or religious purposes.

Use of School Board technology resources for any illegal activities shall also be prohibited. Illegal activities may include but are not limited to: (a) tampering with computer hardware or software, (b) unauthorized entry into computers and files (hacking), (c) knowledgeable vandalism or destruction of equipment, and (d) deletion of computer files. Such activity is considered a crime under state and federal law.

#### SECURITY

Teachers and other personnel who have computers in their charge shall be responsible for the security of those computers in terms of both hardware and software. Computers must be secured such that students acting without the consent or supervision of a teacher or administrator cannot enter the network or access the Internet. Computers and other network capable devices owned by the School Board but used off School Board property

shall be used in compliance with all provisions of this policy.

Employees should not allow others to have access to or use their e-mail accounts or disclose their, or others' passwords. All employee passwords shall be on file with the employee's immediate supervisor. Should a password be changed, the employee shall notify their supervisor immediately.

Employee's e-mail accounts shall not be readily accessible by students.

### DISCIPLINE AND DUE PROCESS

Compliance with this policy shall be a condition of employment. Any employee who violates this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action that may include up to and including employment termination.

All Morehouse Parish public schools shall cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to any illegal activities conducted over the School Board's network resources.

The results of any investigation conducted under this policy shall be considered admissible evidence in any proceeding related to workers' compensation or claims for unemployment compensation and in any other administrative proceeding, hearing or civil litigation when the inappropriate use of the School Board's technology resources is relevant. Action to discipline/terminate an employee under this policy shall be subject to any due process hearing that may be required by law and/or School Board policy.

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

All technology resources and equipment shall only be used for lawful purposes. Unlawful transmission of information or material in violation of Federal and/or State laws could lead to prosecution of an individual or individuals responsible for the unlawful action. The user shall abide by the provisions of this policy and shall be held responsible for any unethical or illegal activity. Any violation of this policy may mean loss of online privileges and/or disciplinary measures by the Superintendent and/or School Board. Any inappropriate activity by the user that constitutes a criminal offense shall be the legal responsibility of the user and not the school, school district, or School Board.

### LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

The Morehouse Parish School Board technology network and computer system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The School Board does not make any warranties, whether expressed or implied, including, without limitation, those of fitness for a particular purpose with respect to any services provided by the system and any information or software contained therein. The School Board uses a variety of vendor-supplied hardware and software. Therefore, the School Board does not warrant that the functions or services performed by, or that the information or software contained on the

system will meet the user's requirements. Neither does the School Board warrant that the technology network and any components shall be uninterrupted or error-free, nor that defects shall be corrected.

The School Board shall not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss, damage or unavailability of data stored on school district diskettes, tapes, hard drives or servers, or for delays or changes in or interruptions of service or misdeliveries or nondeliveries of information or materials, regardless of the cause. The School Board shall not be responsible for the accuracy or quality of any advice, service, or information obtained through or stored on school district computers and technology network. The School Board shall not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the School Board technology network or the Internet.

Opinions, advice, services, and all other information expressed by system users, information providers, service providers, or other third party individuals in the system are those of the providers and not necessarily the School Board.

The School Board shall cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the School Board's computer systems and networks.

Ref: 20 USC 7131 (*Internet Safety*); 47 USC 254 (*Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)*); La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 17:100.7, 17:280, 51:1951, 51:1952, 51:1953, 51:1954.

## EMPLOYEE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The Morehouse Parish School Board recognizes the importance of incorporating current technology tools, including new methods of electronic communication, into the classroom to enhance student learning. It further recognizes the importance of employees, students and parents engaging, learning, collaborating and sharing in digital environments. The School Board strives to ensure that electronic communication tools incorporated into the school curriculum are used responsibly and safely. As practicable, the School Board shall provide access to secure social media tools and approved technologies for use during instructional time and for school activities in accordance with policies *EFA, Internet Safety and District Network Use* and *IFBGA, Computer Access and Use for Students*.

The Morehouse Parish School Board acknowledges that employees may engage in the use of social media during their personal time. Employees who use social media for personal purposes must be mindful that they are responsible for their public conduct even when not acting in their capacities as school district employees. All employees, including student teachers and independent contractors shall comply with the requirements of this policy when using electronic social media for personal purposes.

For the purposes of this policy, *social media* includes, but is not limited to, personal websites, web logs (blogs), wikis, social network sites, online forums, virtual worlds, video-sharing websites and any other social media generally available to the public or consumers that does not fall within the School Board's technologies network (e.g., Web 2.0 tools, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr, YouTube).

### SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS INVOLVING STUDENTS

Employees shall maintain a professional relationships with students at all times in accordance with policies *GAMIA, Electronic Communications Between Employees and Students*, and *GBRA, Employee Conduct*. All electronic communications with students who are currently enrolled in the school district must be school-related and within the scope of the employees' professional responsibilities, unless otherwise authorized by this policy. School personnel using School Board-controlled technological resources and social media tools to communicate directly with students or to comment on student matters through use of the Internet shall abide by all policies governing such activities. An employee seeking to utilize and/or establish a non-school-controlled social media website for instructional or other school-related purposes shall obtain prior written approval from the Superintendent or his/her designee and the principal and meet any applicable requirements of policies *EFA, Internet Safety and District Network Use* and *IFBGA, Computer Access and Use for Students*.

The use of electronic media for communicating with students and parents is considered an extension of the employee's workplace responsibilities. Accordingly, the Morehouse Parish School Board shall expect employees to use professional judgment when using social media or other electronic communications.

Employees shall be prohibited from knowingly communicating with current students through a personal social network page. Any electronic communication made by an employee to any student enrolled in a public school in this school district or that is received by an employee from any student enrolled in a public school in this school district using a means other than one provided by or made available by the school district shall be reported by the employee in a manner deemed appropriate by the School Board.

#### EMPLOYEE PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The Morehouse Parish School Board respects the right of employees to use social media as a medium of self-expression on their personal time. As role models for the school district's students, however, employees shall be responsible for their public conduct even when they are not performing their job duties as employees of the School Board. Employees shall be held to the same professional standards in their public use of social media and other electronic communications as they are for any other public conduct. Furthermore, employees remain subject to applicable state and federal laws, School Board policies, and administrative regulations and procedures, even if communicating with others concerning personal and private matters. If an employee's use of social media interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties or causes a substantial disruption to the school environment, the employee shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Employees shall be responsible for the content on their social media sites, including content added by the employee, the employee's friends or members of the public who can access the employee's site, and for Web links on the employee's site. Employees shall take reasonable precautions, such as using available security settings, to restrict students from viewing their personal information on social media websites and to prevent students from accessing materials that are not age-appropriate.

Employees shall be prohibited from accessing social networking websites for personal use during instructional time or with School Board technological resources.

#### POSTING TO SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

Employees who use social media for personal purposes shall be aware that the content they post may be viewed by anyone, including students, parents and community members. Employees shall observe the following principles when communicating through social media:

1. Employees shall not post confidential information about students, employees or school district business.
2. Employees shall not accept current students as "friends" or "followers" or otherwise connect with students on social media sites, unless the employee and student have a family relationship or other type of appropriate relationship which originated outside of the school setting.

3. Employees shall not knowingly allow students access to their personal social media sites that discuss or portray sex, nudity, alcohol or drug use or other behaviors associated with the employees' private lives that would be inappropriate to discuss with a student at school.
4. Employees shall not use profane, pornographic, obscene, indecent, lewd, vulgar or sexually offensive language, pictures or graphics or other communication that could reasonably be anticipated to cause a substantial disruption to the school environment.
5. Employees shall not use the school district's logo or other copyrighted material of the district without express, written consent from the Morehouse Parish School Board
6. Employees shall not use Internet postings to libel or defame the Morehouse Parish School Board, individual Morehouse Parish School Board members, school district employees, or students.
7. Employees shall not use Internet postings to harass, bully or intimidate other employees or students in violation of School Board policies or state and federal laws.
8. Employees shall not post inappropriate content that negatively impacts their ability to perform their jobs.
9. Employees shall not use Internet postings to engage in any other conduct that violates School Board policies and administrative procedures or state and federal laws.

### CONSEQUENCES

School Board personnel may monitor online activities of employees who access the Internet using school technological resources. Additionally, the Superintendent or designee may periodically conduct public Internet searches to determine if an employee has engaged in conduct that violates this policy. Any employee who has been found by the Superintendent to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

The Superintendent shall establish and communicate to employees guidelines that are consistent with this policy.

Ref: U.S. Constitution, Amend. I; 17 USC 101 et seq. (*Copyrights*); 18 USC 2510-2522 (*Electronic Communications Privacy Act*); 20 USC 1232g (*Family Educational and Privacy Rights*); 20 USC 7131 (*Internet Safety*); 47 USC 254 (*Children's Internet Protection Act*).

## COPYRIGHT

It is the policy of the Morehouse Parish School Board to abide by the provisions of the Copyright Law of the United States and the Congressional Guidelines that delineate it.

The School Board does not sanction illegal use or duplication of copyrighted materials in any form. Employees who willfully violate the copyright position of the School Board do so at their own risk and assume all liability and responsibility.

The School Board directs that:

1. Unlawful copies of copyrighted materials may not be produced on School Board-owned equipment or within School Board-owned facilities.
2. Unlawful copies of copyrighted materials may not be used with School Board-owned equipment, within School Board-owned facilities, or at School Board-sponsored functions.
3. Information about copyright law and guidelines shall be made available to all employees.

The School Board delegates to the building level administrator the responsibility for informing employees of the Copyright policy of the School Board and of provisions of the United States Copyright Law.

Ref: 17 USC 101 et seq. (*Copyright Act of 1976*), 37 CFR 201 (*Patents, Trademarks and Copyrights*).

## BUSINESS CONTINUITY AND TECHNOLOGY DISASTER RECOVERY

The Morehouse Parish School Board recognizes the importance of maintaining and protecting computer hardware and software, including necessary equipment and supplies to maintain computer operations in the event of a disaster. The School Board shall authorize the Superintendent and/or his/her designee to maintain appropriate regulations and procedures for the proper usage of School Board owned or leased computer equipment and the protection of electronic media, applications, and stored user data.

Such regulations and procedures shall assure that the following are addressed:

1. Device patching, anti-virus software, critical business functions, and any backup and restoration planning.
2. A *Business Continuity and Technology Disaster Recovery Plan* shall be created that establishes actions to be taken before, during, and after an occurrence, undesirable event, or disaster. The *Plan* shall be updated on a continuing basis and presented to the School Board.

### CYBERSECURITY TRAINING

The School Board through the Superintendent shall identify employees or School Board members who have access to the School Board's information technology assets and require those employees and School Board members to complete cybersecurity training. Each School Board member or employee with access to the School Board's information technology assets shall complete this training within the first thirty (30) days of initial service or employment with the agency.

The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall verify and report to the Louisiana Department of State Civil Service on the completion of cybersecurity training by employees. The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall periodically require an internal review to ensure compliance.

The School Board through the Superintendent shall require any contractor who has access to School Board information technology assets to complete cybersecurity training during the term of the contract and during any renewal period.

Completion of cybersecurity training shall be included in the terms of a contract awarded by a state or local government agency to a contractor who has access to its information technology assets.

The person who oversees contract management for the School Board shall report each such contractor's completion to the Superintendent and periodically review agency



contracts to ensure compliance. The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall verify and report to the Department of State Civil Service on the completion of cybersecurity training by each such contractor.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 42:1267, 1-14-21.

## INSURANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

The Morehouse Parish School Board recognizes that proper management of the school district includes concern for the safety of students, employees and the general public as well as concern for protecting the system's property from loss. No new School Board policy, regulation, or procedure shall be adopted or approved by the School Board without first giving careful consideration to the school district's risk exposure.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall be responsible for establishing a risk management and insurance program governing all property, employee, and program risks related to the performance of the educational and service missions of the school system. The risk management and insurance program shall include means for identifying, eliminating, reducing, retaining or transferring risk exposures. The School Board realizes that the assumption of some predictable risk is the most economically feasible method of treating certain exposures. When in the apparent best interest of the school system, the School Board may budget for, and retain, limited and predictable risks of financial loss.

When the purchase of insurance is deemed necessary, such purchase shall be made on the basis of service offered by the insurer, the reliability and financial stability of the insurer, and the price of the insurance as competitively determined.

The School Board does not recognize any obligation to purchase insurance from a particular agent, broker, insurer representative, or state insurance fund of any kind other than an obligation based on the above stated considerations.

The responsibility for administering the total insurance program shall be delegated to the Superintendent and the administrative staff. Underlying such administrative delegation, specifications for insurance coverage of various types shall first be prepared for review and approval by the School Board. Approved specifications shall be forwarded to all interested companies who wish to submit competitive bids. Any modification of these specifications which may from time to time be considered necessary because of changes in the law or substantial change in the School Board's exposure value shall be brought before the School Board for discussion and adoption.

The Superintendent may seek professional risk management advice, if necessary, in order to develop, implement and maintain an effective risk management and insurance program for the Morehouse Parish School Board.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 17:159.2, 17:169, 32:601.

## EMPLOYEE INSURANCE COVERAGES

The Morehouse Parish School Board may offer or provide benefit services to its employees to enhance the workplace environment and working relationship of all employees. If approved by the Morehouse School Board, such benefits shall be designed to improve the health of all employees, thus promoting an efficient and healthy workplace.

### HEALTH INSURANCE

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall contract with a health care provider for health, hospitalization, and life insurance benefits for its eligible School Board members, employees, retirees, and/or their spouses and children. The School Board may pay any portion of an employee's premium it so designates provided the School Board's portion meets the minimum contribution by the Louisiana Office of State Group Benefits. Employees and retirees shall be responsible for any portion of the employee's health care premium not paid by the School Board.

Any qualified employee, retiree, School Board member, together with dependents, shall be eligible to participate in the hospitalization and health care coverage selected by the School Board. Any employee who terminates his/her employment with the School Board shall not be covered by the School Board's health care plan as of the date of termination. However, any employee who terminates employment with the School Board may apply for continued health care coverage in accordance with regulations of the *Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA)*.

### AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY INSURANCE

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall require all employees of the Morehouse Parish School Board who use their own vehicles while on official school business during the course of their employment to carry automobile liability insurance. The amount of coverage shall be at least that required by state law or a minimum which may be set by the School Board.

### UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

The School Board shall use the reimbursing employer method of participating in financing the School Board's share of unemployment compensation as permitted by state law.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:1201, 17:1221, 23:1034, 23:1081, 23:1472, 32:601, 42:821, 42:851, 42:851; Israel v. Gray Ins. Co. 720 So.2d 803(98-525 La. App. 3 Cir. 10/28/98).

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall authorize and direct the Superintendent to ensure workers' compensation coverage for its employees. Employees injured while acting in their official capacity shall be entitled to appropriate workers' compensation benefits prescribed under state statutes for the period of time while injured. Any employee reporting an injury or incapacitation due to a work-related accident shall be required to submit proper certification of the injury and/or incapacitation from a licensed physician.

At the time of employment, all employees shall be required to complete a questionnaire about their health and any previous accidents, injuries, or workers' compensation claims submitted, which shall be maintained in the employee's personnel file.

### REPORTING OF ACCIDENTS

Should an accident occur to an employee while in the course of his/her duties, the employee shall immediately notify his/her supervisor. Once reported, a detailed report shall be submitted by the employee's supervisor to the Superintendent or designee within five (5) days of the accident. Additional written commentary about the accident may also be required from the employee's supervisor. Periodic medical exams and subsequent reports verifying prolonged disability may be required as needed.

Immediately following any accident, whether or not injury occurs, the administrator of the school or facility shall file an *Investigation of Accident Report* with the Superintendent or designee. If an injury occurs, an LWC-WC IA-1 Form (*Louisiana Workforce Commission, Worker's Compensation – Employers First Report of Injury or Illness*) must also be completed.

### BENEFITS

Employees injured while on official school business shall be entitled to applicable workers' compensation benefits in accordance with state law.

Sick leave benefits may be used to supplement workers' compensation benefits. If a *teacher* chooses to utilize current and accumulated sick leave benefits in conjunction with workers compensation benefits, the combination of the two benefits shall not be more than 100% of the *teacher's* salary at the time of injury. In this situation, the balance of the *teacher's* current and accumulated sick leave days shall be reduced by the corresponding percentage of the *teacher's* salary paid for with sick leave benefits.

If an employee who has chosen to simultaneously receive both workers' compensation wage benefits and current and accumulated sick leave benefits exhausts all sick leave days, he/she shall thereafter receive only workers' compensation wage benefits.

### ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE

No workers' compensation benefits shall be allowed for an injury caused by the injured employee's intoxication at the time of injury.

In order to support a finding of intoxication due to alcohol or drug use, the School Board shall have the right to administer drug and alcohol testing or demand that the employee submit to drug and alcohol testing immediately after the alleged job accident. Such alcohol and drug testing shall be administered in accordance with School Board policy. If the results of the drug test are positive, or the alcohol tests show blood alcohol equal to or greater than the limits outlined in state law, the employee shall be considered intoxicated, in which case the employee shall not be entitled to any workers' compensation benefits.

If the employee refuses to submit to drug and alcohol testing immediately after the accident, then it shall be presumed that the employee was intoxicated at the time of the accident, in which case the employee shall not be entitled to any workers' compensation benefits.

All drug and alcohol testing shall be in accordance with state law and School Board policy.

### LOSS CONTROL

The School Board, recognizing the potential severity of on-the-job injuries and its costs to the school system and employees, shall require the Superintendent to maintain an aggressive loss control program aimed at reducing and controlling risks of personal injury to employees and property damage to School Board facilities. The loss control program shall assure compliance with all safety and health laws, ordinances, and regulations that apply to the work place.

### SETTLEMENT OF CLAIMS

The Superintendent shall be authorized to settle workers' compensation claims after consultation with School Board counsel and the third-party claims administrator.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:1201, 23:1021, 23:1031, 23:1034, 23:1081, 23:1121, 23:1124, 23:1201, 23:1208.1, 23:1224; Israel v. Gray Ins. Co., 720 So2d 803 (98-525 La. App.3 Cir. 10/28/98).

## STUDENT INSURANCE PROGRAM

The Morehouse Parish School Board may make available student accident insurance for purchase for students attending Morehouse Parish public schools. If such student accident insurance is available, an application form provided by the insurance carrier shall be sent home with students during the first week of school. For football players, an application form shall be offered to each player prior to the start of summer football practice. The schools shall not be liable for any premium payment. Claim forms shall be furnished by the insurance carrier and copies shall be available in the school office.

The School Board does not assume liability for accidents to students or to athletes who do not carry insurance nor does it assume liability for accidents to students who carry insurance beyond the policy coverage (this includes special football coverage).

### EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES INSURANCE COVERAGE

The parents/legal guardians of all students, or the student if eighteen (18) years of age or older, participating on any interscholastic athletic team, including varsity football, junior varsity football, junior high football, all basketball, baseball, track, swimming, any other competitive sport for boys or girls, cheerleading squads, dance team, band, and any sponsored work-based program, shall be required to purchase student accident insurance or shall be required to sign a *Student Insurance Waiver* form declining student insurance, submitting the name of the private insurance company the parents use, and acknowledging full responsibility for any expenses associated with any injury suffered by the student as a result of participating in any extracurricular activity. The insurance form shall be presented to the school before the student shall be permitted to participate in any athletic or other activity for which insurance coverage is needed.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.

## PROPERTY INSURANCE

The Morehouse Parish School Board, recognizing the value and importance of its buildings and other physical facilities, shall purchase adequate insurance for all property of the School Board, both real and personal, against loss or damage by fire, vandalism, theft and other hazards. The insurable value of all property shall be recorded and maintained periodically to assure purchase of property insurance with appropriate limits. The Superintendent and administrative staff shall be responsible for overseeing the evaluation of all School Board property in order to protect it from loss through the purchase of adequate and appropriate insurance coverages.

In determining the amount of insurance to be carried, there shall be included in the cost or insurable value thereof the actual cost and/or replacement value of the building itself (including the foundation), including all built-in, fixed, and attached fixtures and equipment; and including also all water, sewage, and utilities fixtures and equipment located within the confines of the building and above the foundation; and including also all loose or movable furniture, fixtures, and equipment.

All insurance policies shall contain a provision by endorsement or otherwise, specifying that such insurance policy shall also protect the insured for any necessary fees for architects or engineers employed by the insured as a result of loss to the property insured.

When any property covered by insurance of the School Board is lost, damaged, or destroyed, a notice concerning the loss shall be sent immediately to all affected companies, or their representatives, carrying insurance policies on said property.

The Superintendent or his/her designee shall act as adjustor for the School Board in the settlement of losses. The School Board may authorize the services of a third party to assist in adjustment of any loss. The Superintendent shall recommend to the School Board a basis for settlement, including summarized statement with such details as may be necessary as the basis of settlement. The School Board shall consider for approval any settlement recommendation from the Superintendent.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.

### **DAMAGE TO EMPLOYEE'S PERSONAL PROPERTY**

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall not be held responsible for any employee's personal property or items which may be stolen, lost or damaged while on school premises.

### **DAMAGES TO EMPLOYEE VEHICLES**

The School Board shall not be responsible for damages to glass, exterior body parts, or mechanisms of vehicles on a school campus except when damage is the direct result of school-owned and operated equipment. Proof of damage by school-owned and operated equipment must be witnessed by an adult and a signed written report of such damage shall be made immediately following the incident.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.

Morehouse Parish School Board



## CASUALTY INSURANCE

### SCHOOL BUS LIABILITY COVERAGE

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall require each contract bus operator ten (10) days prior to the commencement of each school year, to provide the Superintendent and his/her designee with a copy of his/her insurance policy covering a full year and a paid receipt for the policy. Should any coverage aspects or insurance provisions change during the year, the bus operator shall notify the Superintendent or his/her designee within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt of notification. Failure to comply with these requirements shall result in suspension without pay of the bus operator until such time as the bus operator is in compliance.

Each policy shall name the Morehouse Parish School Board as an *additional named insured* and must provide the minimum liability coverage of \$1,000,000 and such other limits as the School Board may determine.

The School Board shall provide for insurance on district-owned buses, if any.

### AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall require employees of the School Board, who use their own vehicles while on official school business during the course of their employment, to carry automobile liability insurance. The amount of coverage shall be at least that required by state law or higher limits as set by the School Board.

Persons using their own vehicles shall submit verification of coverage to the Superintendent or his/her designee before commencing any travel or being eligible for expense reimbursement.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:159, 17:159.1, 17:159.2, 32:861, 32:862, 32:863, 32:863.1, 32:864, 32:865, 32:898, 32:899, 32:900.

## CONTRACTORS AND VENDORS

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall require all contractors and vendors doing business with the School Board to maintain adequate insurance coverage. Such coverage shall include workers' compensation and third party liability coverage. The contractor or vendor may not appear at the facility either to unload materials or to begin work until a valid insurance certificate has been provided to the Superintendent or his/her designee. If the contractor or vendor cannot provide these coverages, another contractor or vendor may be secured.

1. No contract shall be countersigned by the Superintendent or authorized School Board representative unless a valid insurance certificate has been provided.
2. Once a valid insurance certificate has been received, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall assure that the certificate is valid and meets the limits prescribed in the specifications and/or contract agreement.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.

**FACILITY EXPANSION PROGRAM  
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

It shall be the objective of the Morehouse Parish School Board to authorize the construction or renovation of a sufficient number of school buildings to meet the demands of present and future student enrollments and, in doing so, provide the most productive educational environment possible for students at the lowest expenditure of tax dollars.

Decisions pertaining to the construction of educational facilities shall be made only after an attempt has been made to carefully consider the viewpoints and needs of students, teachers, parents, and other taxpayers and receive pertinent advice from qualified professionals.

Architects employed by the School Board shall be expected to plan for utility, simplicity of design, sound economics, including low long-range maintenance costs and insurance rates, high educational utility, flexibility, and energy conservation.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.

## FACILITIES PLANNING

It shall be the responsibility of the Morehouse Parish School Board to consider, revise and adopt recommendations of the Superintendent and members of his/her staff for planning adequate buildings and equipment for the school district. All such plans and recommendations should be in keeping with state building rules and regulations.

The School Board shall instruct the Superintendent to coordinate all phases of the building effort. Such coordination should include but not be limited to direction of planning activities, investigation of potential funding sources, and overall supervision of all building projects once construction begins. The Superintendent shall keep the School Board fully informed and make recommendations which he/she deems are appropriate relative to time allowance differentials, change orders and final approval of completed projects.

The School Board and Superintendent shall prepare education specifications for a new facility and an architect shall then be retained to translate those specifications into building designs and construction specifications. The Superintendent shall be authorized to secure the services of experts in the areas of school plant planning to work with professional personnel, citizens, students and administrative personnel during educational specification preparation if he/she considers such assistance beneficial.

The School Board shall select, upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, architects and/or engineers as needed to design new school buildings and/or to renovate existing buildings. All such persons, i.e. architect and general contractor, shall post a performance bond with a surety company licensed to do business in Louisiana. All architects shall carry errors and omissions insurance.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 38:2219, 38:2241; Louisiana Handbook for School Administrators, Bulletin 741, Louisiana Department of Education.

## ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall employ certified architects and engineers, in an objective and equitable manner, at approved fees, to perform professional services for projects involving planning, design or study in specialized fields, such as site development, plumbing, heating, air conditioning, structural, foundations, electrical, communications, and others.

Selection of credentialed professionals to provide appropriate services for the School Board's capital projects shall utilize a qualifications-based process. The process shall foster fair and open competition to select the person(s) who is best able to produce quality projects within budget and on schedule.

The School Board shall not appoint architects to do detailed drawings and specifications on any construction project until such project is scheduled within the next fiscal year to begin construction.

Contracts with architects/engineers shall be in writing, and prior to execution and approval by the School Board, be reviewed by the School Board's attorney. Compensation/fees paid to architects/engineers shall be agreed to by the School Board, in accordance with a formula for calculation of fees as adopted by the School Board, and stipulated in the contract upon its approval.

Prior to the commencement of work under a contract, the architect/engineer shall furnish the School Board a *Certificate of Insurance* indicating the proper insurance coverages in limits established by the School Board.

After submission by the architect/engineer of the original drawings of the project, any corrections necessary shall be made within the time frame allotted in the contract. Once corrections have been made, the title drawing shall contain a note signed by the architect/engineer that he or she certifies any corrected drawings. All changes or deviations from original plans must also be noted on the drawings modified. One clear, sharp and legible copy of the plans shall be provided, signed with live stamp of the architect/engineer visible. Plans shall also be submitted on a diskette or cd-rom disk in a digital format approved by the School Board.

The architect/engineers shall, by signing the contract, agree that any and all disputes under the contract, including disputes with related third parties who do any work related to this contract, shall be tried in the proper local district court for the State of Louisiana and does formally agree not to raise and does waive any pleas of lack of jurisdiction and/or venue in the event of suit by any party under the contract.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.

## SUPERVISION OF CONSTRUCTION

The Morehouse Parish School Board shall require from the Superintendent or his/her designee, or the designated construction supervisor, which may be a School Board employee or outside agent, a periodic review of the architect's activities in his/her administration of building construction. The Superintendent shall make periodic reports certifying by his/her personal knowledge that the work of the construction contractor and the architect is being performed in accordance with plans, specifications, and contracts. In addition to the periodic reports, a semi-annual report on all construction aspects, to include the work of contractors and architects, shall be presented to the School Board.

The School Board shall require major projects under construction to be inspected on a weekly or more frequent basis as determined by the construction supervisor or other representatives of the School Board. The results of such inspections shall form the basis of reports given to the School Board regarding building progress.

Requests made by contractors for extensions of time to their contracts, for delay or days missed due to inclement weather, shall be documented on a day by day basis and submitted for the School Board's consideration. No extension shall be granted where proper documentation has not been submitted and the penalty clause of the contract shall be enforced.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.

## SITE ACQUISITION

The Morehouse Parish School Board believes that site selection and development should start from the premise that the school is an integral and inseparable part of the total community. Since the school is a community institution, it should reflect this relationship physically as well as ideologically.

The manner and extent to which a site serves a school district's educational needs should be considered as only one aspect of its adequacy. Adequacy should also be appraised in respect to its potential for contributing to the scope and depth of many other cultural functions in the community.

The state legislature has charged local school boards in Louisiana with the sole responsibility for selecting and acquiring, through donation or purchase, school sites and this authority cannot be delegated. The processes of selection, however, concern the entire administration and supervisory staffs, and others with special skills and insights. The Superintendent, therefore, shall be authorized to establish such criteria and procedures as are necessary to assure the citizens and School Board that the best possible sites are being acquired for the least expenditure of public funds.

The site acquisition procedure shall follow all necessary procurement laws such as advertisement, procurement of an appraisal, due diligence period, and all applicable contractual language. Furthermore, the School Board shall act on each and every acquisition by passing a Resolution authorizing such acquisition. The School Board shall consider the advice of appropriate staff and others as deemed appropriate.

### PURCHASE OF PROPERTY

The School Board shall require the Superintendent or his/her designee to obtain a written appraisal of any property being considered for purchase and make the appraisals available for review by the School Board members. At least two (2) real estate appraisals shall be required, and submitted by state certified appraisers. The School Board members shall be provided all relevant information and details of any proposed property transactions before the School Board takes action on the proposal.

In order to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest, all proposed sellers of real property shall be identified. Once the School Board approves the purchase of real property, the School Board shall approve a formal resolution authorizing the purchase of the property from the actual seller(s).

### EXPROPRIATIONS

The Morehouse Parish School Board may expedite the purchase of a given piece of property for public school purposes in order that negotiations with the owner may begin

immediately. The School Board shall maintain communication with the owner or his/her counsel as proceedings develop in order to provide an opportunity to negotiate a purchase rather than resort to or continue court action. It shall be the School Board's declared intent to negotiate reasonably and amicably and to avoid friction when possible while continuing negotiations. However, if a problem arises during negotiations which delays acquisition of the property by the School Board, expropriation proceedings may ensue as provided by law to enable the School Board to acquire the property.

Ref: Constitution of Louisiana, Art. I, Sec. 4; La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§17:81, 19:1, 19:2, 19:2.1, 19:2.2.



## CHANGE ORDERS

The Morehouse Parish School Board, in order to increase or decrease the amount of a contract after bids have been officially accepted by the School Board, shall require the approval of a change order. A change order shall be submitted by the contractor to the project architect or the School Board employed construction manager and upon his/her recommendation, such change orders shall be submitted to the Superintendent for his/her recommendation of action to be taken by the School Board. The School Board shall permit change orders not to exceed \$25,000.00 to be approved upon agreement by both the Superintendent and the School Board President without needing further School Board action. The Superintendent shall be responsible to notify all School Board members of the change order and the amount.

If the change order is approved by the School Board or Superintendent and School Board President, in consultation with the architect or the School Board employed construction manager, shall put the change order into effect and make it a part of the official contract price.

All public work contracts shall contain provisions authorizing the issuance of change orders within the scope of the contract. The Morehouse Parish School Board, in order to increase or decrease the amount of a contract after bids have been officially accepted by the School Board, shall require the approval of a change order. Change orders shall not exceed the total approved project budget.

All change orders shall be submitted by the contractor, in writing, to the project architect or the School Board employed construction manager and, upon his/her recommendation, such change orders shall be submitted to the Superintendent or his/her designee for consideration and recommendation to the School Board for approval. Once a change order is approved, the Superintendent or his/her designee, in consultation with the architect or the School Board employed construction manager, shall put the change order into effect and make it a part of the official contract price.

Any change order that is outside the scope of the contract and in excess of the *contract limit* as defined under La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §38:2212 shall be let out for public bid.

Any change order pertaining to a public work which is not required to be put out for public bid shall either be negotiated in the best interest of the School Board or let out for public bid. Where the change order is negotiated, the School Board shall require that said change order be fully documented and itemized as to costs, including material quantities, material costs, labor, taxes, insurance, employee benefits, other related costs, and overhead. Where certain unit prices are contained in the initial contract, no deviations shall be allowed in computing negotiated change order costs.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §§38:2211, 38:2212.

## **SCHOOL BOARD INSPECTION AND ACCEPTANCE OF NEW FACILITIES**

It shall be the policy of the Morehouse Parish School Board that the acceptance of new construction be withheld until completion is certified by the architect, along with the School Board construction manager and Superintendent.

No such certification shall be made until all contractual agreements have been met to an extent considered satisfactory under the Louisiana laws and prescribed School Board standards.

Upon completion of the construction, the School Board, Superintendent or his/her designee, and the architect, along with the School Board construction manager, shall make an inspection of the project before the School Board may accept the finished product. Any payments involved shall be reviewed at this time, and the School Board, with advice of the architect, shall have final authorization for any payment.

Ref: La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:81.