

HACKBERRY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT #3

Cedar Hills School



9501 Nellie Drive, Kingman, Az 86401

Employee Handbook
School Year 2026-2027

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NOTICE TO EMPLOYEE

It is every employee's responsibility to become familiar with the materials contained in the Hackberry Elementary School District #3 **2026-2027** Employee Handbook.

The information contained in this handbook applies to all employees of Hackberry Elementary School District #3. It is presented as a matter of information only and its contents should not be interpreted as a contract between the district and any of its employees, nor does it imply continuing employment. Nothing contained within this handbook should be interpreted to supersede Governing Board Policy. Any verbal or written representations to the contrary of the above statements are invalid and should not be relied upon by any prospective or existing employee.

As soon as you have received your handbook, complete the information on the last page, sign, and return it to the Business Manager, Samuel Dell.

As stated above, the policies referenced herein have been summarized to provide you with basic information. The selected policies are those that most affect the district employees. A complete policy can be found in the District's Policy Manual at www.azsba.org.

HESD GUIDING DOCUMENTS

Mission Statement

Hackberry Elementary School District #3 seeks to create a challenging learning environment in a unique, small, rural, school setting that encourages high expectations for success. We use developmentally appropriate instruction allowing for individual differences and learning styles while upholding high academic standards. Our school prides itself in promoting a safe, orderly, caring, and supportive environment. Each student's self-esteem is fostered by positive relationships with students and staff. We strive to have our parents, teachers, and community members actively involved in our students' learning.

Cedar Hills Vision Statement

Hackberry Elementary School District #3 will encourage all students to become life-long learners. All students are encouraged to achieve their personal best. The school community will provide a safe learning environment with highly qualified and supportive staff. We will work to develop a relationship among all stakeholders, (parents, extended family, staff, students, etc.) who are all working together to provide the students with a solid educational foundation. Students are expected to leave Hackberry Elementary School District #3 with:

- 1) A set of moral values-honesty, integrity, and good judgment.
- 2) A complete set of skills in the areas of linguistics, mathematics, science, art, physical fitness, and social skills.
- 3) An inquiring and discriminating mind, critical thinking skills, and a desire for knowledge.
- 4) A strong sense of self-esteem and high personal expectations.
- 5) The ability to respect and appreciate others.
- 6) The skills necessary to become productive citizens who actively contribute to society.

We value the partnership which must exist between the school, parents, and community and the part it plays in making this vision a reality.

Cedar Hill Guiding Principles and Values

CHILDREN:

Children are our purpose, our future, our inspiration. With continuing education and high standards, all HESD students are equipped to succeed.

COMMUNITY:

We enhance teaching and learning for all children by recognizing and responding to the needs of our community. By instilling good citizenship, students develop integrity and accountability.

CONSIDERATION OF OTHERS:

We respect and honor individuals and are open to other viewpoints and perspectives.

DIVERSITY:

We embrace diversity by acknowledging, accepting, and appreciating individual differences.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT:

We value continuous improvement and search for ways to grow our education programs.

TEACHING AND LEARNING:

We engage in the learning process by recognizing the unique gifts of everyone.

DECISIONS:

We believe in shared decision making with our community and school district with a primary focus on children.

Governing Board Members & Meetings

Leanne Donason.....	Governing Board President
Pamela Adams.....	Vice President
Tammy Herrera.....	Board Member
Valerie Grimes.....	Board Member
Charla Loomis.....	Board Member

Governing Board meetings are held at 4:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month (with some exceptions). Special meetings may be called as needed for study sessions on the budget and for in-depth review of other areas relating to the business of the School District. The agenda is posted in advance at Cedar Hills School and on the website www.hesd.net.

SY 26-27 Monthly Schedule

July 14, 2026

August 11, 2026

September 8, 2026

October 13, 2026

November 10, 2026

December 8, 2026

January 12, 2027

February 9, 2027

March 9, 2027

April 13, 2027

May 11, 2027

June 8, 2027

**Cedar Hills Staff Members
SY 26-27**

Christina Ramirez Superintendent
Samuel Dell.....Business Manager
Allyson Van Voris Administrative Secretary
Rodora Gray..... Teacher
Rochelle Farrell.....K-1 Teacher
Karry Whitten 2-3 Teacher
Debbie Lund..... 4-5 Teacher/Administrator
Arlene Nicolas 6-7-8 Teacher
Ashley Woodward..... Reading Intervention Teacher/Paraeducator
Stacy Durst.....Math Intervention Teacher/Paraeducator
Kim Patterson..... Food Service
Paul Van Steen Bus Driver
Christopher Gates Maintenance/Custodial

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT & WELFARE

Staff Conduct (Policy GBEB)

All employees of the district are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that supports effective, orderly education and safeguards the well-being of students and district property. Employees shall not, through action or inaction, interfere with or disrupt district operations or encourage others to do so. No employee may carry or possess a weapon on school grounds without prior authorization from the Superintendent. Employees are required to maintain order, follow all district policies, rules, and regulations, and comply with directives issued by the Superintendent. Violations of these expectations may result in consequences including, but not limited to, removal from school grounds; civil or criminal sanctions, including those available under Title 13, Chapter 29, Arizona Revised Statutes; written or verbal warnings; reprimands; suspension; dismissal; and consideration of such violations in determining compensation or contract terms in future employment.

Staff Conduct with Students (Policy GBEBB)

Employees are expected to provide appropriate supervision of students at all times, including before and after school, during recess, and in the classroom, and to treat all students with dignity and respect while avoiding unnecessary embarrassment. Students are expected to recognize all District employees as individuals who contribute directly or indirectly to the learning environment and to respect the rights of staff and peers; interference with those rights will not be tolerated. Students may not disrupt or impede instructional activities, the learning efforts of other students, or the work responsibilities of any employee. All District personnel are required to conduct themselves with students in a manner consistent with community standards, professional ethics, and acceptable social and moral behavior. Relationships between staff and students that involve dating, courtship, romantic involvement, or any conduct that violates professional boundaries are strictly prohibited and considered contrary to District expectations. Staff–student interactions must reflect mutual respect, uphold the dignity of the profession, and support the integrity of the educational process. Violations of these expectations are considered serious and may result in significant disciplinary action.

Staff Ethics (Policy GBEA)

All employees of the district are expected to uphold high standards of professional conduct in all school relationships, recognizing that the school exists to serve the public and provide equitable educational opportunities for all students. Employees share responsibility for demonstrating leadership within the school and community, understanding that their actions are subject to the appraisal of students, colleagues, and the public. To that end, employees shall make the well-being of students the guiding principle in all decisions; maintain courteous, respectful, and appropriate relationships with students, parents, staff, and community members; remain knowledgeable and efficient in their professional duties; fulfill responsibilities with honesty and integrity; direct any criticism of colleagues or District departments toward constructive improvement through appropriate administrative channels; support due process and protect the civil and human rights of all individuals; comply with all local, state, and federal laws; implement Governing Board policies and administrative regulations; refrain from using school relationships or resources to advance political, sectarian, or personal agendas; pursue appropriate measures to address laws or policies inconsistent with sound educational goals; avoid using their position for personal gain; engage in ongoing professional development; safeguard and appropriately use District property and resources; and honor all contractual obligations. Employees shall maintain the confidentiality of information obtained in the course of their duties unless disclosure is required by law or necessary to fulfill District purposes.

Staff use of Digital Communications and Electronic Devices (Policy GBEF)

The district defines social media as any web-based or mobile technology used to create, share, or exchange information through interactive communication. This includes, but is not limited to, blogs, picture-sharing

platforms, video logs, wall postings, email, instant messaging, music-sharing services, crowdsourcing tools, Voice over IP (VoIP), and social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, and any successor technologies. Mobile technologies include any device capable of transmitting or storing sounds, images, text, messages, videos, or electronic information; accessing the Internet or private networks; or recording, playing, or storing digital content. Examples include smartphones such as Android and iPhone devices, as well as subsequent generations of similar technologies.

The Governing Board recognizes that digital communication tools provide expanded opportunities for engagement and collaboration, while also presenting potential risks to the District, its employees, students, and the community. Employees are required to use all digital communication tools and electronic devices in a professional, ethical, and responsible manner consistent with District policies, applicable laws, and established standards of conduct. Misuse of social media or digital technologies may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and may constitute a violation of federal or state law. The Superintendent is responsible for communicating approved technologies, applicable record management requirements, and reporting procedures to all employees annually and during the hiring process.

Reporting Suspected Crimes of Incidents

Staff members are to report any suspected crime against a person or property that is a serious offense, involves a deadly weapon or dangerous instrument or that could pose a threat of death or serious injury to employees, students or others on school property. All such reports shall be communicated to the Superintendent who shall be responsible for reporting to the local law enforcement.

Use of Physical Force by Supervisory Personnel

Administrators, teachers, and other school employees entrusted with the care and supervision of minors may use reasonable and appropriate physical force when necessary to maintain order. Such force may also be used in self-defense, in the defense of students or school personnel, or to prevent or stop theft or criminal damage to District property or the property of individuals lawfully on District premises. The use or threat of physical force is not justified in response to verbal provocation alone, nor is it permitted when the degree of force is disproportionate to the situation or exceeds what is necessary to prevent injury or protect property.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Support Staff Vacations and Holidays (Policy GDD)

Vacation Accrual

All regular twelve-month support staff employees accrue paid vacation as follows:

- During the first year of employment: Employees earn 1 vacation day per month.
- After the first year of employment: Employees earn 1.25 vacation days per month, up to a maximum accrual of 15 days.

Once an employee reaches the 15-day maximum, no additional vacation time will accrue until the balance falls below 15 days. When the balance drops below the maximum, vacation accrual will resume until the limit is reached again. All vacation requests must be approved by the Superintendent.

Professional Staff Vacations and Holidays (Policy GCD)

Holidays

When any of the following holidays fall within the school week, the school will be closed, and teachers and full-time staff will receive full compensation:

- Independence Day (July 4)
- Labor Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day

- Christmas Day

The Governing Board may also declare a Winter recess of up to two school weeks, during which teachers will continue to receive compensation. Additional holidays or non-school days will be determined by the approved school calendar.

Professional/Support Staff Fringe Benefits (Policy GCBD & GDBD)

The Governing Board will review professional and support staff fringe benefits annually as part of the District's budget process. Based on this review, the Board may modify available benefits when such changes are determined to be in the best interest of the District. Each year, the Board will also establish the minimum eligibility requirements for participation in fringe benefit programs.

Overtime for Classified Employees

Nonexempt employees will not work more than 40 hours per week without prior authorization from the Superintendent. Employees working in excess of 40 hours per week will be paid overtime if prior approval has been obtained.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Conflict of Interest Statement

Employees and Governing Board members will be asked to sign a Conflict of Interest Statement for their protection as outlined in the Governing Board Policy Manual, policy GBEEA and BCB. Sign and return the conflict of interest statement attached at the end of this packet.

Professional Appearance Expectations:

Hackberry Elementary School District #3 expects all employees to present themselves in a professional manner that reflects positively on our school community. Professional dress supports three essential goals: projecting a professional image to students, families, and the public; maintaining a positive and distraction-free work environment; and ensuring employee safety while performing job duties. Because all employees represent the district, their dress, grooming, and personal hygiene contribute to the community's perception of our professionalism and influence the overall school climate.

The employees of the Hackberry Elementary School District #3 should make certain that their professional dress reflect the high standards expected of the school, community, and District. All employees must be professionally dressed and wear proper clothing appropriate with the task they are performing. Professional, yet casual attire is acceptable.

1. Clothing must be neat, clean in good repair and appropriate for the environment and particular job position. Nice jeans and shirts are acceptable. Appropriate shoes should be worn according to specific work assignments and safety.
2. Clothing should not be either, too loose, too tight or too short is permitted. Clothing displaying abusive, vulgar, or offensive language, advertising cigarettes or alcohol, and/or making reference to drugs are prohibited. Also prohibited is clothing that is too revealing, suggestive, or ill fitting.
3. Spaghetti straps, halter tops, sheer see through tops, tank tops, spandex, jean shorts, midriff-baring shirts, sweatpants, pajamas and rubber flip flops are not professional attire. Permission to dress more casual may be granted to employees who demonstrate a need because of their particular position with the district
4. When attending professional events, trainings, conferences, or any activity where they represent the District, they are expected to follow the standard staff dress code.

If you have any questions on what is considered acceptable, check with the Superintendent.

Professional Staff Duties and Responsibilities (Policy GCMF)

Teachers are required to make student learning the primary focus of their professional responsibilities; maintain firm expectations for appropriate student behavior; supervise students during recess or playground duty when assigned; take and maintain accurate daily attendance; make promotion or retention decisions in accordance with A.R.S. 15-342; and comply with all Governing Board rules, regulations, and policies related to their duties.

Teachers shall not use sectarian or denominational materials, teach sectarian doctrine, or conduct religious exercises in the course of their work. Failure to meet these expectations constitutes unprofessional conduct and may result in disciplinary action by the Governing Board and the State Board of Education. Additionally, any teacher who is arrested for, or charged, with a nonappealable offense listed in A.R.S. 41-1758.03(B), and does not immediately report the arrest or charge to their supervisor is guilty of unprofessional conduct and shall be dismissed from employment with the district.

(Duties of Teachers; Failure to Comply is Unprofessional Conduct; Penalty)

Staff Meetings

The Superintendent will schedule and conduct staff meetings, as necessary, to support effective communication and school operations. All staff members are required to attend scheduled staff meetings unless they have received prior approval for an excused absence from the Superintendent.

The Governing Board and administration recognize the importance of grade-level and departmental collaboration. A limited number of such meetings may be held during the regular school day, provided that the required minimum instructional minutes for the grade level are maintained. Arrangements for these meetings shall be coordinated through the Superintendent.

Work Attendance and Availability

All staff members are required to report to work on time each workday and remain available on campus until the conclusion of their scheduled workday. The Superintendent may adjust, extend, or modify the school day as needed for meetings, special events, or school-related activities. Duties connected to the educational program including participation on school or District committees, attendance at parent conferences, and involvement in designated after-school activities are considered part of "other duties as assigned."

Supervisory Responsibilities

To ensure student safety and maintain a secure school environment, teachers and staff may be assigned supervisory duties during the school day. These duties are considered a regular and essential part of each staff member's responsibilities and must be carried out as assigned.

Attendance at School Events and Required Activities

Staff members are expected to attend required events and activities that occur outside the regular workday. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Staff meetings
- Professional development and trainings
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Back-to-School Night
- Holiday programs
- Graduation and promotion ceremonies
- Other school-sponsored events as assigned

Attendance at these events is considered part of each staff member's professional responsibilities.

Staff Leaving Campus During Lunch Break

Employees who leave campus during their lunch break are required to sign out in the front office. The sign-out sheet is located on the secretary's desk. Staff must notify an administrator before leaving campus and again upon returning.

Time Clock Procedures

All classified employees are required to use the District time clock to record their actual hours worked each day, including the final day reported on each timecard. Employees are responsible for clocking in and out accurately at the beginning and end of their work shifts, as well as for any approved breaks that require time tracking. Depending on the employee's start date and the District payroll schedule, the first paycheck will be issued no later than two weeks after the close of the pay period. Any employee who experiences an error or difficulty with clocking in or out must notify the Superintendent immediately so that a correction can be made. Accurate timekeeping is essential for payroll processing and compliance with District policy.

Call-In Procedures

It is the responsibility of all professional and support staff to notify the Superintendent no later than 5:00 a.m., when reporting an absence. When an absence is known in advance, such as personal leave, professional leave, or other pre-approved time off, staff must inform the Superintendent as soon as the need is known. Employees must also notify the Superintendent by 1:00 p.m. if they will be returning the following school day; failure to do so will result in a substitute being scheduled for professional staff. A Leave form must be submitted to the Superintendent within 24 hours of returning to work. Failure to follow these procedures will result in progressive disciplinary action: a written warning filed in the personnel folder for the first offense; a second written notice for failure to follow standard operating procedures, which may include consideration of termination; and termination upon a third offense. It is the employee's responsibility to notify the Superintendent of any absence.

Protection of District Property

It is the responsibility of all employees to protect and care for District property. If you have personal property in your classroom, office, or work area, you are responsible for maintaining an inventory of what you have. This list should be filed into your personnel file. The inventory is necessary to prove any loss you sustain through fire or other disasters with your own insurance carrier. Personal property is not covered under the District insurance policy.

School Purchases

The Hackberry Elementary School District #3 conducts the business of purchasing merchandise and/or services through the issuance of preauthorized purchase order numbers. This practice is strictly enforced. Providing merchandise and/or service to the district without a preauthorized purchase order number puts both the employee who placed the order and the vendor at risk. Payment for services and/or merchandise delivered without a preauthorized purchase order number will be the personal responsibility of the employee who placed the order, and the vendor will need to seek payment from that individual.

Use of Technology

The District provides technology resources to teachers and staff. The District has a strict policy on the proper use of these resources. The use of technology resources shall support education, research, and the education goal of the District.

Every employee shall be furnished a copy of the District's use of technology policy and will receive a

Computer Use Notice attesting to receipt and understanding of the policy. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action which may include loss of pay, suspension and/or dismissal.

GRIEVANCES

Staff Grievances Policy (GBK)

Effective communication among District employees, administrative staff, and the Governing Board is essential to the proper operation of the school. To support timely and efficient resolution of concerns, the Governing Board authorizes the Superintendent to establish and implement a grievance procedure that addresses employee grievances at the earliest possible stage and at the lowest appropriate administrative level.

The grievance procedure shall include an opportunity for Governing Board review when a grievance cannot be resolved through administrative channels. In such cases, the employee may submit a written request for Board review. The request must clearly state the basis for the appeal, including the actions or circumstances giving rise to the grievance, the specific Board policies or administrative regulations involved, and the remedy being sought. This written request must be submitted to the Superintendent within five (5) working days of receiving the Superintendent decision, for transmittal to the Governing Board.

The Governing Board will review the grievance at a time of its choosing and will issue a written response within fifteen (15) working days following its review. The decision of the Governing Board is final.

LEAVES AND ABSENCES

Absence Notification

All employees who, for any reason, find that they will be unable to report for work as scheduled, are required to call the Superintendent.

- A doctor's note is required prior to returning back to work if the employee is absent for more than 3 days consecutively.
- If absent prior to, or immediately, following a holiday or break, a doctor's note is required upon returning to work.

Staff Sick Leave (Policy GCCA)

Sick leave is compensated leave available when an employee is unable to work due to personal illness, injury, quarantine, or the illness of an immediate family member.

The District operates on a four-day work week; one sick day equals ten (10) hours.

Accrual:

- Twelve-month employees: 12 days per year
 - Ten-month employees: 10 days per year
- Sick leave is earned at one (1) day per pay period and prorated for employees who do not work a full school year.

Staff Personal/Emergency/Religious Leave (Policy GCCB)

Employees are granted up to three (3) personal leave days per fiscal year. Requests must be submitted at least four (4) working days in advance and require approval from the District Administrator. Personal leave (PTO) is non-accumulating and does not roll over to the next fiscal year. Requests will be reviewed in the order received. Approval may be limited based on substitute availability, when applicable.

Bereavement

Employees may be granted up to five (5) days of paid bereavement leave per year upon request to the Superintendent, for the death of a family member as defined in Policy GCCA.B. The Superintendent may approve additional bereavement leave upon personal request. Any approved extension will be deducted from the employee's accrued sick leave. If an employee has no accumulated sick leave, the Superintendent may, upon request, approve unpaid leave for each day of extended bereavement leave used.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

The District complies with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), providing eligible employees, those with at least 12 months of service and 1,250 hours worked in the prior year, up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave per fiscal year for birth, adoption, or foster placement; qualifying family or personal serious health conditions; and certain military-related needs. Leave for birth or foster placement must be used within 12 months, and spouses employed by the District may share a combined 12-week entitlement for specific purposes. Employees must use applicable paid leave as required, provide 30 days' notice when foreseeable, and submit medical certification within 15 days. Intermittent or reduced-schedule leave may be approved when medically necessary, and instructional staff may be subject to additional rules near semester end. The District continues health insurance during FMLA leave under normal terms, with premium repayment required if the employee does not return unless circumstances prevent it. Upon return, employees are restored to the same or an equivalent position, and a fitness-for-duty release may be required; restoration rights may differ for designated key employees.

MANDATED POLICIES

Reporting Child Abuse (Policy JLF)

Any school personnel, or any other person responsible for the care or treatment of a minor, must immediately report suspected abuse or neglect. A report is required when the individual reasonably believes that a minor is or has been the victim of physical injury, abuse, child abuse, a reportable offense, or neglect that appears to be non-accidental or is not explained by the available medical history.

A report is also required when the individual reasonably believes that a minor has been denied or deprived of necessary medical treatment, surgical care, or nourishment with the intent to cause or allow the death of an infant protected under A.R.S. 36-2281.

Reports must be made immediately, either electronically or by telephone, to a peace officer or to the Department of Child Safety (DCS). If the suspected perpetrator is not a person who has care, custody, or control of the minor, the report must be made only to a peace officer.

The Arizona Department of Economic Security, Division of Children, Youth and Families, has determined that all mandated reporters may now electronically submit non-emergency reports via a secure online reporting website. Non-emergency reports are those in which a child is not at immediate risk of abuse or neglect that could result in serious harm. Mandated reporters will be able to submit non-emergency reports twenty-four (24) hours a day without wait times.

All reports made via the online website will require the person making the report (reporting source) to provide contact information. A representative from the Child Abuse Hotline may contact the source for additional information, if necessary. This process will make it more convenient to meet the mandated reporting requirements and help ensure child safety.

All emergency situations where a child faces an immediate risk of abuse or neglect that could result in serious harm must still be reported by calling 911 or 1-888-SOS-CHILD (1-888-767-2445). If a reporting source is unsure as to whether or not the report is an emergency situation, the reporting source should call the Child Abuse Hotline to make a report.

Any concerns for the safety of a child due to abuse, neglect or abandonment, *must be reported*, by:

Calling 1-888-SOS-CHILD (1-888-767-2445),
TDD: 602-530-1831 (1-800-530-1831), or
Submitting non-emergency concerns via the online Reporting Service at
<https://dcs.az.gov/about/contacts>

Any school official or employee who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, or who has observed a child being subjected to circumstances or conditions which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, will immediately report, or cause a report to be made to Child Protective Services, as required by law, 888.767.2445.

If the school authority (teacher, school nurse, principal, social worker) has firsthand knowledge of the facts of abuse or neglect, he shall immediately report or cause reports to be made of such information to protective services of the State Department of Economic Security. Such a report shall be followed by a written report within 24 hours.

Drug-Free Workplace (Policy GBEC)

Employees are prohibited from manufacturing, distributing, dispensing, possessing, or using alcohol or any controlled substance, as defined by Federal law, in violation of District policy or applicable statutes while on or in the workplace. For purposes of this policy, the workplace includes all school buildings, school premises, District-owned or District-approved vehicles used for transporting students or staff, all school-sponsored or school-approved activities, and any property owned, leased, or used by the District for educational or business purposes. Employees convicted of any criminal drug offense occurring in the workplace must notify the Superintendent within five days of the conviction. As a condition of employment, all employees must comply with the District's drug-free workplace policy. Violations may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Smoke and Tobacco Free Environment Policy GBED

The possession or use of tobacco products, tobacco substitutes, electronic cigarettes, vapor products, or other chemical inhalation devices is prohibited on all school grounds, in school buildings, parking lots, playing fields, District vehicles (including school buses), and at all off-campus school-sponsored events. Under A.R.S. 36-798.03, violations constitute a petty offense. These prohibitions do not apply to adults using such products solely for approved instructional demonstrations as part of a tobacco prevention or cessation program established in accordance with A.R.S. 15-712.

Sexual Harassment (Policy ACA)

All individuals associated with the District—including Governing Board members, administrators, staff, and students—are expected to maintain an environment free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when such behavior is tied to conditions of employment or education, used as a basis for decisions affecting an individual, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or learning environment. Prohibited conduct may include suggestive or obscene communications, derogatory comments, unwanted touching, blocking movement, displaying sexually suggestive materials, continuing to express sexual interest after being told it is unwelcome, or using coercive or manipulative behavior to influence grades, assignments, evaluations, or employment benefits.

The District strictly prohibits offering or withholding academic or employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors, as well as any conduct that interferes with an individual's educational opportunities or work performance. Anyone who experiences or becomes aware of sexual harassment is expected to report the concern to the compliance officer as outlined in ACA-R. Substantiated violations will result in disciplinary action: staff may face corrective measures up to and including dismissal, and students may face consequences up to suspension or expulsion. All reports and investigations will be handled confidentially to the extent possible.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Policy

The District complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which protects the privacy of student education records. All employees are required to safeguard student information and ensure that education records are accessed, used, and disclosed only for legitimate educational purposes. Employees may access student records only when such access is necessary to perform their assigned duties and must not share, discuss, or release student information to anyone including other staff, parents, or outside agencies—unless authorized by law or approved by the Superintendent or designee. Personally identifiable student information must never be disclosed without written parent/guardian consent, except in situations specifically permitted by FERPA. Employees must follow all District procedures for maintaining, storing, transmitting, and disposing of student records. Any suspected or actual breach of student information must be reported immediately to the Superintendent. Failure to comply with FERPA requirements may result in disciplinary action.

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYEMENT

Resignation Procedures

Professional Staff Members

Professional staff members who wish to resign or request release from their employment contract must submit a written resignation to the Governing Board for approval.

A release from an uncompleted contract may be granted only when an appropriately qualified, certificated replacement is available. A teacher who resigns in violation of this policy may be considered to have engaged in unprofessional conduct and may be subject to penalties as outlined in Arizona statutes and State Board of Education regulations.

Classified (Support) Staff Members

Classified employees who intend to terminate their at-will employment must submit written notice to the Superintendent. The notice must include both the final day of employment and the reason for resignation.

Final Pay and Accrued Leave

Eligible, authorized unused vacation credits will be paid out on the employee's final paycheck.

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

Equal Employment Opportunity

Discrimination against an otherwise qualified individual with a disability or any individual by reason of race, color, religion, sex, age, or national origin is prohibited. Efforts will be made in recruitment and employment to ensure equal opportunity in employment for all qualified persons.

Evaluation of Professional Staff Members (Policy GCO)

The evaluation process for certificated professional staff is designed to strengthen instructional quality and support continuous professional growth. Each professional staff member will be evaluated twice annually. All evaluations are conducted in accordance with Arizona State statute and District policy. Evaluation results are used to assess performance, guide improvement efforts, and ensure high standards of professional practice across the District.

Evaluation of Support Staff Members (Policy GDO)

All support staff members are evaluated under the direction of the Superintendent. A written evaluation of each employee's effectiveness will be completed during the first year of employment, no later than ninety (90) days from the first day of work. A second evaluation will occur on or before the employee's anniversary date. Thereafter, each support staff member will receive at least one evaluation annually. The purpose of the evaluation process is to promote increased job proficiency, provide constructive feedback, and support decisions regarding continued employment within the District.

Professional Staff Development

The Governing Board is committed to supporting the ongoing professional growth of all certificated and non-certificated staff. Within the limits of the District budget, employees may be provided opportunities for continued development, including in-service training, workshops, school or District visitations, conferences, access to professional resources, and guidance from supervisors and consultants. The Board also encourages staff participation in educational research when such activities align with District priorities and do not interfere with the essential functions of the schools.

TRANSPORTATION

Staff Use of Digital Wireless Communications or Electronic Devices While Operating a Motor Vehicle (Policy GBEFA)

Arizona law (A.R.S. 28-914) prohibits employees from operating a motor vehicle while holding or supporting a portable wireless communication device or stand-alone electronic device. Employees may not write, send, or read text-based communications while driving. Hands-free, voice-activated use is permitted, including navigation and other vehicle-related functions, and in-vehicle systems may be used when they do not require hand use beyond activating or deactivating a feature. Employees may use a device to report illegal activity, request emergency assistance, or relay work-related information when the device is affixed to the vehicle. For the purposes of this policy, portable wireless communication devices include cell phones, text-messaging devices, PDAs, stand-alone computers, GPS receivers, and similar equipment, but do not include radios, CB or commercial two-way radios, emergency communication devices, prescribed medical devices, amateur/ham radios, or in-vehicle security, navigation, or diagnostic systems. The Superintendent will provide training to

support implementation of this policy.

Transportation Services (Policy EEB)

Administrative Requirements

Administrators are responsible for ensuring that the use of school vehicles is appropriate and not subject to misuse within or outside the District. All travel conducted for District purposes must receive prior approval from the Superintendent. Any use of a private vehicle for school business must be authorized in advance by the Superintendent.

Use of School Vehicles

School vehicles shall not be used for personal business, except when such personal business is incidental to an approved school-related trip. On a space-available basis, the family of an employee or Governing Board member may accompany them on an out-of-town trip if prior approval is granted by the Superintendent. Only Governing Board members or District employees are permitted to operate school vehicles. A school vehicle may not be taken to an employee's or Governing Board member's home overnight unless specific permission has been granted by the Superintendent.

Use of Private Vehicles

A private vehicle may be used for District business only when authorized by the Superintendent.

Reimbursement will be provided to the vehicle owner at the mileage rate established by the District. Mileage outside the District will be reimbursed only for travel directly related to school business. Employees and Governing Board members using a private vehicle for an approved school trip may not claim mileage for any portion of travel that is personal in nature.

Individuals authorized to use a private vehicle for District purposes will receive written notification that their personal automobile insurance serves as the primary coverage, while District insurance is secondary. Each authorized employee or Governing Board member must provide proof of current automobile insurance to the District before using a private vehicle for school business.

VERIFICATION OF RECEIPT

Verification Receipt of Employee Handbook

All employees are given an employee handbook describing policies and procedures. This form verifies receipt of this handbook and will be kept in the employee's personnel file.

I acknowledge receipt of my **2026-2027** Employee Handbook and will abide by the policies and procedures stated therein.

Job Title: _____

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

STAFF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

I, _____, do hereby indicate:

1. That I am presently an officer/employee of the Hackberry Elementary School District #3;
2. That I (or my relative(s): _____
Have a substantial interest in the contract, sale, purchase, or service to or decision by the Hackberry Elementary School District #3 Governing Board as described below.
3. That I shall refrain from participating in any manner in my capacity as an employee or officer of Hackberry Elementary School District #3 in such contract, sale, purchase, service to, or decision by the Governing Board unless specifically permitted to do so by law.

Date

Signature

Description of Conflict: