2023-2024

Substitute Handbook

La Villa Independent School District considers applications for all positions without regard to race, color, national origin, age, religion, sex, marital status, veteran or military status, the presence of a medical condition, disability, or any other legally protected status.

LA VILLA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Substitute Handbook
2023-2024

La Villa Independent School District
Human Resources Department
500 E. 9TH Street/P.O Box 9/La Villa, Texas 78562
Phone (956) 262-4755/Fax (956) 262-2723

Equal Employment Opportunity

The La Villa Independent School District (LVISD) will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, religion, sex marital status, age, national origin, disability or any other basis prohibited by law. Employment decisions will be made on the basis of each applicant's qualifications, experiences and abilities.

If you have difficulty accessing the information in this document because of a disability, please e-mail:
Amalia Munoz at amalia.munoz@lavillaisd.org

Website: www.lavillaisd.org

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Introduction

We welcome you as an important member of the La Villa ISD teaching team. Like all teachers in our district, you are assisting with helping young people to achieve their educational goals. It is our belief that you are a part of a dedicated core of substitute teachers whose focus and desire is to provide our students with a quality educational experience.

In an effort to clarify policies and procedures that apply to substitutes and to make your work more effective and enjoyable, we ask that you review the information in this handbook prior to taking your first assignment for this year. It is your responsibility to read and retain this handbook as a source of guidelines and valuable information pertinent to the La Villa ISD Substitute Program.

Your service is particularly important to us because we understand that you agree to take a substitute teaching assignment on short notice. We realize that your regular plans for the day must be changed abruptly with little time to prepare. We appreciate your kind consideration in helping La Villa ISD students continue their education.

Please do not hesitate to contact the office of the Superintendent if you have any concerns regarding your role as a substitute teacher in our district. We can be reached at 956-262-4755. Thank you for your service.

District Information

La Villa Independent School District Vision

Transforming Lives-Empowering Excellence

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of La Villa ISD is to empower future generations of ethical, caring, critical thinkers who are willing to take the risk necessary to be successful citizens.

School Calendar

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LA VILLA INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
180 Day Calendar
2023--2024 INSTRUCTIONAL CALENDAR
Board Approved on February 27, 2023

JUNE 2023

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JULY 2023

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AUGUST 2023 4

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SEPTEMBER 2023 21

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OCTOBER 2023 21

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NOVEMBER 2023 17

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DECEMBER 2023 16

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LEGEND

Teacher Work Days		
Staff Development Days		
Weather Days		
Staff Development/Innovation Days		
Summer ADSY/ACE Operational Days	#	
Student 1st day of school/Classes resume		
Early Release Days		
District Holidays		
State Assessment Days		

First Day of School: August 28, 2023

REPORTING PERIODS	DATES	# of DAYS
1ST	8/28-9/29	25
2ND	10/2-11/10	29
3RD	11/13-12/22	25
4TH	1/9-2/23	33
5TH	2/26-4/19	34
6TH	4/22-6/7	34

Last Day of School/Graduation Date: June 7, 2024

STAFF/STUDENT HOLIDAYS

Weather Make Up Days	October 9, February 12
Thanksgiving Break	November 20 - 24
Christmas Break	December 25 - January 5
Early Release Days	Nov. 17, Dec. 22, March 8/28, June 7
Spring Break	March 11-15
Good Friday/Easter	March 29, 2024

STUDENT SCHEDULES

CAMPUS	TIME	MINUTES
ELEMENTARY	8:00 AM TO 3:45 PM	82,575
MIDDLE SCHOOL	8:00 AM TO 4:10 PM	87,100
HIGH SCHOOL	8:00 AM TO 4:10 PM	87,100

TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

La Villa ISD	956-262-4755
J.B. Munoz Elementary	956-262-9357
La Villa Middle School	956-262-4760
La Villa Early College High School	956-262-4715

DAYS OF INSTRUCTION

Fall Instruction Days	79
Spring Instruction Days	101
Total Instruction Days	180
Staff Working Days	187
Summer Instruction Days	25

180 + 4 PD & 3 TWD=187

JANUARY 2024 17

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MARCH 2024 15

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APRIL 2024 22

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MAY 2024 22

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JUNE 2024 5

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JULY 2024

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10

Paychecks

The schedule of pay dates for the 2023-2024 school year follows:

LA VILLA ISD
SCHEDULE OF DUE DATES
FOR SUPPLEMENTAL PAY
FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2023-2024

Pay Period	Beginning Pay Period	Ending Pay Period	Supplemental Pay Form Due Date	Pay Date
July	6/4/2023	6/24/2023	6/27/2023	7/7/2023
July	6/25/2023	7/8/2023	7/11/2023	7/21/2023
August	7/9/2023	7/22/2023	7/25/2023	8/4/2023
August	7/23/2023	8/5/2023	8/8/2023	8/22/2023
September	8/6/2023	8/26/2023	8/29/2023	9/7/2023
September	8/27/2023	9/9/2023	9/12/2023	9/22/2023
October	9/10/2023	9/23/2023	9/26/2023	10/6/2023
October	9/24/2023	10/7/2023	10/11/2023	10/20/2023
November	10/8/2023	10/21/2023	10/24/2023	11/3/2023
November	10/22/2023	11/4/2023	11/7/2023	11/17/2023
December	11/5/2023	11/18/2023	11/28/2023	12/7/2023
December	11/19/2023	12/2/2023	12/5/2023	12/22/2023
January	12/3/2023	12/16/2023	12/19/2023	1/8/2023
January	12/17/2023	12/30/2023	1/9/2024	1/22/2023
February	12/31/2023	1/13/2024	1/16/2024	2/7/2024
February	1/14/2024	1/27/2024	1/30/2024	2/22/2024
March	1/28/2024	2/10/2024	2/14/2024	3/7/2024
March	2/11/2024	3/2/2024	3/5/2024	3/22/2024
April	3/3/2024	3/16/2024	3/19/2024	4/5/2024
April	3/17/2024	4/6/2024	04/09/202	4/22/2024
May	4/7/2024	4/20/2024	4/23/2024	5/7/2024
May	4/21/2024	5/4/2024	5/7/2024	5/22/2024
June	5/5/2024	5/25/2024	5/28/2024	6/7/2024
June	5/26/2024	6/8/2024	6/11/2024	6/21/2024

Please make sure that all necessary information is submitted to the Business Office no later than 10:30 AM.

Three Weeks
Academic Stipends

General Information

Individuals applying for substitute teaching positions are required to complete an application in person at our Central Administration Office located at 500 E. 9th Street., La Villa, Texas 78562. Postings for substitute teaching positions will be posted once in the beginning of the year.

Credentials and documentation required for an application to be considered complete include: High School Transcripts or GED, College Transcripts, and Texas Teaching Certificate (if applicable).

All completed applications will be considered.

Salary scale is as follows. Substitutes can be paid in half day and whole day increments:

Daily Rates for Substitute Employees

Bachelor's Degree and Valid Texas Teacher Certification Longterm	$185.00
Bachelor's Degree and Valid Texas Teacher Certification	$175.00
Bachelor's Degree/Master	$120.00
Non-degreed	$105.00

Substitutes are required to work in half or full day assignments. The official school hours for campuses are indicated below:

CAMPUS	ASSIGNMENT TIMES
J.B. Elementary School	7:45 am to 4:10 pm
La Villa Middle School	7:45 am to 4:10 pm
La Villa Early College High School	7:45 am to 4:10 pm

The campus administration may re-assign a substitute to an area of need, at their discretion. Should that occur, the substitute will work a full day. Substitutes are asked to arrive at their assignment 30 minutes prior to starting time. If a substitute arrives late, it will be reported to campus administration and the department of Human Services. Time worked will reflect an 8 hour workday or 4 hour workday. Time is not inclusive of the 30 minutes for lunch.

NOTE: Time reflects eight (8) working hours when working a full day assignment, campus administration will release or hold you for 4 or 8 hours of work until the assignment has been completed.

La Villa Independent School District
Substitute Employee Compensation Plan
2023-2024

Substitute Teaching Positions:	
Non-Degreed/Non-Certified:	$105.00
Degreed/Non-certified:	$120.00
Degreed/Certified:	$175.00
Degreed/Certified Permanent Sub	$185.00
Auxiliary Positions:	
All Maintenance and Food Service Substitutes	$9.50
Nursing Positions:	
All Substitute Registered Nurses/LVN	$25/hour

All required documents regarding salary, i.e., transcripts, certification, etc., must be received in the Central Administration Office to ensure accurate pay is received. The district **will not make salary adjustments on previous payrolls due to failure to provide required documents.**

Accepting and canceling Assignments: Once you have accepted an assignment under **NO** circumstances, unless an emergency occurs, will you be able to drop the assignment. If an emergency occurs, please contact the campus in which you have accepted the assignment for. immediately.

Release from assignment: a substitute shall continue in the assignment until officially released. It is the responsibility of the supervisor, principal or designated representative to release a substitute or to authorize continuation in the assignment. Before leaving the campus, the substitute shall report to the supervisor or principal's offfice for final instructions. **(Substitutes must sign in and out at the front office.)**

It is recommended that each substitute teacher keep an accurate record of the days worked so that the needed information will be available to correct any errors that may occur concerning the substitute teacher's paycheck. **Substitute teachers may not be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits drawn on school wages during scheduled breaks.**

Name and Address Changes

It is important that employment records be kept up to date. Employees must notify the Central Administration office if there are any changes or corrections to their name, home address, contact telephone number, marital status, emergency contact, or beneficiary. The form to process a change in personal information can be obtained from the district webpage at www.lavillaisd.org.

Automatic Payroll Deposit

Substitute Teachers can have their paychecks electronically deposited into a designated account. A notification period of 2 weeks is necessary to activate this service. Contact the Business Office at 956-262-4755, for more information about the automatic payroll deposit service.

Employment

Equal Employment Opportunity *Policies DAA, DIA*

La Villa ISD does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, or on any other basis prohibited by law. Additionally, the district does not discriminate against an employee or applicant who acts to oppose such discrimination or participates in the investigation of a complaint related to a discriminatory employment practice. Employment decisions will be made on the basis of each applicant's job qualifications, experience, and abilities.

Employees with questions or concerns about discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment should contact Veronica Torres, Assistant Superintendent as the district Title IX coordinator at 956-797-8300. Employees with questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should contact Lillian Ramos at 956-797-8510, the district ADA/Section 504 coordinator. Questions or concerns relating to discrimination for any other reason should be directed to the Superintendent.

Job Vacancy Announcements *Policy DC*

Announcements of job vacancies by position and location are posted on a regular basis to the district's website www.lavillaisd.org.

Substitute Teachers All Substitute Teachers, regardless of certification, are employed at will and not by contract. Employment is not for any specified term and may be terminated at any time by either the employee or the district. The district has the right to terminate you after 3 consecutive months of not substituting. Contact Petra Silva at 956-262-4755 for any concerns or questions on being out for a long period.

Employee Conduct and Welfare

Standards of Conduct

Policy DH

All employees are expected to work together in a cooperative spirit to serve the best interests of the district and to be courteous to students, one another, and the public. Employees are expected to observe the following standards of conduct:

- Recognize and respect the rights of students, parents, other employees, and members of the community.
- Maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to students and coworkers.
- Report to work according to the assigned schedule.
- Notify their immediate supervisor in advance or as early as possible in the event that they must be absent or late. Unauthorized absences, chronic absenteeism, tardiness, and failure to follow procedures for reporting an absence may be cause for disciplinary action.
- Know and comply with department and district policies and procedures.
- Express concerns, complaints, or criticism through appropriate channels.
- Observe all safety rules and regulations and report injuries or unsafe conditions to a supervisor immediately.
- Use district time, funds, and property for authorized district business and activities only.

All district employees should perform their duties in accordance with state and federal law, district policies and procedures, and ethical standards. Violation of policies, regulations, or guidelines, including intentionally making a false claim, offering false statements, or refusing to cooperate with a district investigation may result in disciplinary action, including termination. Alleged incidents of certain misconduct by educators, including having a criminal record, must be reported to SBEC not later than the seventh day after the superintendent knew of the incident.

The *Educators' Code of Ethics*, adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification, which all district employees must adhere to, is reprinted below:

Texas Educators' Code of Ethics

Purpose and Scope

The Texas educator shall comply with standard practices and ethical conduct toward students, professional colleagues, school officials, parents, and members of the community and shall safeguard academic freedom. The Texas educator, in maintaining the dignity of the profession, shall respect and obey the law, demonstrate personal integrity, and exemplify honesty and good moral character. The Texas educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession. The Texas educator,

in accepting a position of public trust, shall measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his or her potential as an effective citizen. The Texas educator, in fulfilling responsibilities in the community, shall cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community. This chapter shall apply to educators and candidates for certification. (19 TAC 247.1(b))

Enforceable Standards

1. Professional Ethical Conduct, Practices, and Performance

Standard 1.1 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in deceptive practices regarding official policies of the school district, educational institution, educator preparation program, the Texas Education Agency, or the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and its certification process.

Standard 1.2 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misappropriate, divert, or use monies, personnel, property, or equipment committed to his or her charge for personal gain or advantage.

Standard 1.3 The educator shall not submit fraudulent requests for reimbursement, expenses, or pay.

Standard 1.4 The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.

Standard 1.5 The educator shall neither accept nor offer gratuities, gifts, or favors that impair professional judgment or to obtain special advantage. This standard shall not restrict the acceptance of gifts or tokens offered and accepted openly from students, parents of students, or other persons or organizations in recognition or appreciation of service.

Standard 1.6 The educator shall not falsify records, or direct or coerce others to do so.

Standard 1.7 The educator shall comply with state regulations, written local school board policies, and other state and federal laws.

Standard 1.8 The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or a responsibility on the basis of professional qualifications.

Standard 1.9 The educator shall not make threats of violence against school district employees, school board members, students, or parents of students.

Standard 1.10 The educator shall be of good moral character and be worthy to instruct or supervise the youth of this state.

Standard 1.11 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent his or her employment history, criminal history, and/or disciplinary record when applying for subsequent employment.

Standard 1.12 The educator shall refrain from the illegal use or distribution of controlled substances and/or abuse of prescription drugs and toxic inhalants.

Standard 1.13 The educator shall not be under the influence of alcohol or consume alcoholic beverages on school property or during school activities when students are present.

2. Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues

Standard 2.1 The educator shall not reveal confidential health or personnel information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

Standard 2.2 The educator shall not harm others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system.

Standard 2.3 The educator shall adhere to written local school board policies and state and federal laws regarding the hiring, evaluation, and dismissal of personnel.

Standard 2.4 The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political, professional, or citizenship rights and responsibilities.

Standard 2.5 The educator shall not discriminate against or coerce a colleague on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, disability, family status, or sexual orientation.

Standard 2.6 The educator shall not use coercive means or promise of special treatment in order to influence professional decisions or colleagues.

Standard 2.7 The educator shall not retaliate against any individual who has filed a complaint with the SBEC or provides information for a disciplinary investigation or proceeding under this chapter.

3. Ethical Conduct toward Students

Standard 3.1 The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law.

Standard 3.2 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly treat a student or minor in a manner that adversely affects or endangers the learning, physical health, mental health, or safety of the student or minor.

Standard 3.3 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly misrepresent facts regarding a student.

Standard 3.4 The educator shall not exclude a student from participation in a program, deny benefits to a student, or grant an advantage to a student on the basis of race, color, gender, disability, national origin, religion, family status, or sexual orientation.

Standard 3.5 The educator shall not intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly engage in physical mistreatment, neglect, or abuse of a student or minor.

Standard 3.6 The educator shall not solicit or engage in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student or minor.

Standard 3.7 The educator shall not furnish alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child or knowingly allow any person under 21 years of age unless the educator is a parent or guardian of that child to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs in the presence of the educator.

Standard 3.8 The educator shall maintain appropriate professional educator-student relationships and boundaries based on a reasonably prudent educator standard.

Standard 3.9 The educator shall refrain from inappropriate communication with a student or minor, including, but not limited to, electronic communication such as cell phone, text messaging, email, instant messaging, blogging, or other social network communication. Factors that may be considered in assessing whether the communication is inappropriate include, but are not limited to:

(i) the nature, purpose, timing, and amount of the communication;

(ii) the subject matter of the communication;

(iii) whether the communication was made openly or the educator attempted to conceal the communication;

(iv) whether the communication could be reasonably interpreted as soliciting sexual contact or a romantic relationship;

(v) whether the communication was sexually explicit; and

(vi) whether the communication involved discussion(s) of the physical or sexual attractiveness or the sexual history, activities, preferences, or fantasies of either the educator or the student.

Employee Dress and Grooming

Policy DH (Local)

The dress and grooming of a District employee shall be clean, neat, in a manner appropriate for his or her assignment, and accordance with the following standards:

1. An employee shall be expected to dress in a manner that projects a professional image for the employee, the District, and the community.
2. Style of clothing for males and females shall always reflect a professional and business-like atmosphere. Dresses, slacks, skirts, and blouses for females should not attract unfavorable attention. Males shall be expected to wear slacks, shirts with collars, or appropriate professional attire.

3. Administration and supervisors shall have the discretion to determine appropriateness of attire and appearance for all personnel in certain grades or subjects (physical education, agriculture, special education) or for medical necessities.

STANDARDS

The following standards shall apply:

1. Cleanliness and neatness are expected of all staff at all times.
2. "The hair of male employees shall be well groomed and not extend below the base of the neck. Men are permitted facial hair if neatly trimmed and moderate in style. All facial hair, must be fully established."
3. Hair shall be clean, well-groomed, and out of the eyes. Relatively conservative hairstyles are expected. Styling should be neat and not distract focus on teaching and learning. Unconventional colored hairstyles are not permitted.
4. Halters, garments with bare shoulders, bare backs, tank tops, spaghetti straps, muscle shirts, see-through garments, and revealing or provocative necklines shall not be permitted. In addition, clothing with the following is unacceptable:
    a. Symbols, including but not limited to, symbols on clothing, jewelry, or other accessories that contain inappropriate meanings, advertise tobacco, alcohol products, or controlled substances; distract or cause undue attention; or result in a general negative impact on the education of students;
    b. Inappropriate language; and
    c. Phrases or slogans advertising tobacco, alcohol products, controlled substances, or political advertisements.
5. Hats, caps, or other head coverings shall not be worn inside the building except as required by specific assignments or events.
6. Footwear shall exclude rubber-soled flip-flops.
7. Leggings, warm-ups, wind suits, sweat suits, spandex or similar tight pants, exercise clothes, and/or any garment that may appear to be an undergarment is unacceptable.
8. Blue denim jeans shall not be worn except on days designated by the district. When denim clothing is designated, it shall be clean and neat with no holes or extreme fading.
9. Jewelry shall not be worn in a visible pierced area other than the ear. Piercing is not permitted for male employees.
10. Covering of tattoos will be left to the discretion of the administrator.

EXCEPTIONS

The following exceptions shall apply:

1. Staff dress may be adjusted for school wide occasions (western day, school spirit day, and the like) upon approval of the principal.
2. Auxiliary employees in maintenance, custodial, food service, or transportation positions; personnel who work in alternative settings; and positions requiring uniforms are exempted from the general guidelines but shall comply with dress and grooming guidelines specified by their supervisors in the handbooks for those positions.

3. Other exceptions to guidelines shall be made by the Superintendent as necessary to allow a staff member to observe religious customs and as necessary to accommodate medical needs or extenuating circumstances.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

Policies DH, DIA

Employees shall not engage in prohibited harassment, including sexual harassment, of other employees, unpaid interns, student teachers, or students. While acting in the course of their employment, employees shall not engage in prohibited harassment of other persons including board members, vendors, contractors, volunteers, or parents. A substantiated charge of harassment will result in disciplinary action.

Individuals who believe they have been discriminated or retaliated against or harassed are encouraged to promptly report such incidents to the campus principal, supervisor, or appropriate district official. If the campus principal, supervisor, or district official is the subject of a complaint, the complaint should be made directly to the superintendent. A complaint against the superintendent may be made directly to the board.

Any district employee who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited conduct based on sex, including sexual harassment, or believes that another employee has experienced such prohibited conduct, should immediately report the alleged acts. The employee may report the alleged acts to his or her supervisor, the campus principal, the Title IX coordinator, or the superintendent. The district's Title IX coordinator's name and contact information is listed in the Equal Employment Opportunity section of this handbook.

The district's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating discrimination, harassment, and retaliation is reprinted below:

District Policy DIA (Local) can be accessed at www.lavillaisd.org; click on School Board Icon; Refer to Board Policy.

Harassment of Students

Policies DH, DHB, FFG, FFH, FFI

Sexual and other harassment of students by employees are forms of discrimination and are prohibited by law. Romantic or inappropriate social relationships between students and district employees are prohibited.

Employees who suspect a student may have experienced prohibited harassment are obligated to report their concerns to the campus principal or other appropriate district official. Any district employee who suspects or receives direct or indirect notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced prohibited conduct based on sex, including sexual harassment, of a student shall immediately notify the district's Title IX coordinator, the

ADA/Section 504 coordinator, or superintendent and take any other steps required by district policy.

All allegations of prohibited harassment of a student by an employee or adult will be reported to the student's parents and promptly investigated. An employee who knows of or suspects child abuse must also report his or her knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. See *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*, page 49 and *Bullying,* page 70 for additional information.

The district's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating harassment of students is reprinted below:

District Policy DHB (Legal) and text of FFH (Local) can be accessed at www.lavillaisd.org; click on School Board Icon; Refer to Board Policy.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

Policies DG, FFG, GRA

All employees with reasonable cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare has been adversely affected by abuse or neglect, as defined by Texas Family Code §261.001, are required by state law to make a report to a state or local law enforcement agency, Child Protective Services (CPS), or appropriate state agency (e.g., state agency operating, licensing, certifying, or registering the facility) within 48 hours of the event that led to the suspicion. Alleged abuse or neglect involving a person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child (including a teacher) must be reported to DFPS unless the report is to the state agency that operates, licenses, certifies, or registers the facility where the suspected abuse or neglect took place; or the report is to the Texas Juvenile Justice Department as a report of suspected abuse or neglect in a juvenile justice program or facility. As defined by law, a person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of a child includes school personnel and volunteers and day-care workers. [See FFG(LEGAL)].

Employees are also required to make a report if they have cause to believe that an adult was a victim of abuse or neglect as a child and they determine in good faith that the disclosure of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of another child, elderly person, or person with a disability.

Reports to Child Protective Services can be made online at https://www.txabusehotline.org/Login/Default.aspx or to the Texas Abuse Hotline (800-252-5400). State law specifies that an employee may not delegate to or rely on another person or administrator to make the report.

Under state law, any person reporting or assisting in the investigation of reported child abuse or neglect is immune from liability unless the report is made in bad faith or with malicious intent. In addition, the district is prohibited from retaliating against an employee who, in good faith, reports child abuse or neglect or who participates in an investigation regarding an allegation of child abuse or neglect.

An employee's failure to report suspected child abuse may result in prosecution as a Class A misdemeanor. The offense of failure to report by a professional may be a state jail felony if it is shown the individual intended to conceal the abuse or neglect. In addition, a certified employee's failure to report suspected child abuse may result in disciplinary procedures by SBEC for a violation of the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics.

Employees who suspect that a student has been or may be abused or neglected should also report their concerns to the campus principal. This includes students with disabilities who are no longer minors. Employees are not required to report their concern to the principal before making a report to the appropriate agency.

Reporting the concern to the principal does not relieve the employee of the requirement to report it to the appropriate state agency. In addition, employees must cooperate with investigators of child abuse and neglect. Interference with a child abuse investigation by denying an interviewer's request to interview a student at school or requiring the presence of a parent or school administrator against the desires of the duly authorized investigator is prohibited.

Sexual Abuse and Maltreatment of Children

As an employee, it is important for you to be aware of warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused or maltreated. Sexual abuse in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. Maltreatment is defined as abuse or neglect. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility under state law for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect following the procedures described above in *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*.

Employees are required to follow the procedures described above in *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*.

Personal Use of Electronic Communications

Policy CQ, DH

Electronic communications includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), web logs (blogs), wikis, electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing websites (e.g., YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram). Electronic communications also includes all forms of telecommunication such as landlines, cell phones, and web-based applications.

As role models for the district's students, employees are responsible for their public conduct even when they are not acting as district employees. Employees will be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic media as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic media interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to

and including termination of employment. If an employee wishes to use a social network site or similar media for personal purposes, the employee is responsible for the content on the employee's page, including content added by the employee, the employee's friends, or members of the public who can access the employee's page, and for web links on the employee's page. The employee is also responsible for maintaining privacy settings appropriate to the content.

An employee who uses electronic media for personal purposes shall observe the following:

- The employee may not set up or update the employee's personal social network page(s) using the district's computers, network, or equipment.

- The employee shall limit use of personal electronic communication devices to send or receive calls, text messages, pictures, and videos to breaks, meal times, and before and after scheduled work hours, unless there is an emergency or the use is authorized by a supervisor to conduct district business.

- The employee shall not use the district's logo or other copyrighted material of the district without express, written consent.

- An employee may not share or post, in any format, information, videos, or pictures obtained while on duty or on district business unless the employee first obtains written approval from the employee's immediate supervisor. Employees should be cognizant that they have access to information and images that, if transmitted to the public, could violate privacy concerns.

- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics, even when communicating regarding personal and private matters, regardless of whether the employee is using private or public equipment, on or off campus. These restrictions include:

    - Confidentiality of student records [See Policy FL]

    - Confidentiality of health or personnel information concerning colleagues, unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law [See Policy DH (EXHIBIT)]

    - Confidentiality of district records, including educator evaluations and private e-mail addresses. [See Policy GBA]

    - Copyright law [See Policy CY]

    - Prohibition against harming others by knowingly making false statements about a colleague or the school system. [See Policy DH (EXHIBIT)]

Electronic Communications between Employees, Students, and Parents

Policy DH

A certified or licensed employee, or any other employee designated in writing by the superintendent or a campus principal, may use electronic communications with students who are currently enrolled in the district. The employee must comply with the provisions outlined below. Electronic communications between all other employees and students who are enrolled in the district are prohibited. Employees are not required to provide students with their personal phone number or e-mail address.

An employee is not subject to provisions regarding electronic communications with a student to the extent the employee has a social or family relationship with a student. For example, an employee may have a relationship with a niece or nephew, a student who is the child of an adult friend, a student who is a friend of the employee's child, or a member or participant in the same civic, social, recreational, or religious organization. An employee who claims an exception based on a social relationship shall provide written consent from the student's parent. The written consent shall include an acknowledgement by the parent that:

- The employee has provided the parent with a copy of this protocol
- The employee and the student have a social relationship outside of school;
- The parent understands that the employee's communications with the student are excepted from district regulation; and
- The parent is solely responsible for monitoring electronic communications between the employee and the student.

The following definitions apply for the use of electronic media with students:

- *Electronic communications* means any communication facilitated by the use of any electronic device, including a telephone, cellular telephone, computer, computer network, personal data assistant, or pager. The term includes e-mail, text messages, instant messages, and any communication made through an Internet website, including a social media website or a social networking website.
- *Communicate* means to convey information and includes a one-way communication as well as a dialogue between two or more people. A public communication by an employee that is not targeted at students (e.g., a posting on the employee's personal social network page or a blog) is not a *communication*: however, the employee may be subject to district regulations on personal electronic communications. See *Personal Use of Electronic Media*, above. Unsolicited contact from a student through electronic means is not a *communication*.
- *Certified or licensed employee* means a person employed in a position requiring SBEC certification or a professional license, and whose job duties may require the employee

to communicate electronically with students. The term includes classroom teachers, counselors, principals, librarians, paraprofessionals, nurses, educational diagnosticians, licensed therapists, and athletic trainers.

An employee who communicates electronically with students shall observe the following:

- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students using any form of electronic communications, including mobile and web applications, that are not provided or accessible by the district unless a specific exception is noted below.

- Only a teacher, trainer, or other employee who has an extracurricular duty may use text messaging, and then only to communicate with students who participate in the extracurricular activity over which the employee has responsibility. An employee who communicates with a student using text messaging shall comply with the following protocol:

    - The employee shall include at least one of the student's parents or guardians as a recipient on each text message to the student so that the student and parent receive the same message;

- The employee shall limit communications to matters within the scope of the employee's professional responsibilities (e.g., for classroom teachers, matters relating to class work, homework, and tests; for an employee with an extracurricular duty, matters relating to the extracurricular activity).

- The employee is prohibited from knowingly communicating with students through a personal social network page; the employee must create a separate social network page ("professional page") for the purpose of communicating with students. The employee must enable administration and parents to access the employee's professional page.

- The employee shall not communicate directly with any student between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. An employee may, however, make public posts to a social network site, blog, or similar application at any time.

- The employee does not have a right to privacy with respect to communications with students and parents.

- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the Texas Educators' Code of Ethics including:

    - Compliance with the Public Information Act and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including retention and confidentiality of student records. [See Policies CPC and FL]
    - Copyright law [Policy CY]
    - Prohibitions against soliciting or engaging in sexual conduct or a romantic relationship with a student. [See Policy DHB]

- Upon request from administration, an employee will provide the phone number(s), social network site(s), or other information regarding the method(s) of electronic media the employee uses to communicate with one or more currently-enrolled students.

- Upon written request from a parent or student, the employee shall discontinue communicating with the student through e-mail, text messaging, instant messaging, or any other form of one-to-one communication.

- An employee may request an exception from one or more of the limitations above by submitting a written request to his or her immediate supervisor.

- All staff are required to use school email accounts for all electronic communications with parents. Communication about school issues through personal email accounts or text messages are not allowed as they cannot be preserved in accordance with the district's record retention policy.

- An employee shall notify his or supervisor in writing within one business day if a student engages in an improper electronic communication with the employee. The employee should describe the form and content of the electronic communication.

Public Information on Private Devices

Policy DH

Employees should not maintain district information on privately owned devices. Any district information must be forwarded or transferred to the district to be preserved. The district will take reasonable efforts to obtain public information in compliance with the Public Information Act. Reasonable efforts may include:

- Verbal or written directive

- Remote access to district-owned devices and services

Criminal History Background Checks

Policy DBAA

Employees may be subject to a review of their criminal history record information at any time during employment. National criminal history checks based on an individual's fingerprints, photo, and other identification will be conducted on certain employees and entered into the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Clearinghouse. This database provides the district and SBEC with access to an employee's current national criminal history and updates to the employee's subsequent criminal history.

Alcohol and Drug-Abuse Prevention

Policy DH

La Villa ISD is committed to maintaining an alcohol- and drug-free environment and will not tolerate the use of alcohol and illegal drugs in the workplace and at school-related or school-sanctioned activities on or off school property. Employees who use or are under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs as defined by the Texas Controlled Substances Act during working hours may be dismissed. The district's policy regarding employee drug use follows:

District Policy DH (Local) and DI (Exhibit) can be accessed at www.lavillaisd.org; click on School Board Icon; Refer to Board Policy.

Tobacco Products and E-Cigarette Use

Policies DH, FNCD, GKA

State law prohibits smoking, using tobacco products, or e-cigarettes on all district-owned property and at school-related or school-sanctioned activities, on or off school property. This includes all buildings, playground areas, parking facilities, and facilities used for athletics and other activities. Drivers of district-owned vehicles are prohibited from smoking, using tobacco products, or e-cigarettes while inside the vehicle. Notices stating that smoking is prohibited by law and punishable by a fine are displayed in prominent places in all school buildings.

Duties and Responsibilities of Substitute Teachers

The substitute teacher is expected to be on duty the entire day/half day and to perform the duties as assigned by the principal or the designated representative. You may be asked to substitute for another class during your teacher's conference period, or you may be assigned other duties as required by the school principal or his/her designee.

The substitute teacher should endeavor to preserve the regular routine of the classroom, to perform all of the duties of the regular teacher, and to follow lesson plans provided by the regular teacher, unless otherwise instructed by the principal or designated representative. If lesson plans cannot be located, the administrator, upon notification, will provide alternative activities.

Once you arrive at the campus and register at the office, ask for the location of the lesson plans alternative plans to use, or who will be assisting you with this task in the event that no lesson plans are available. Ask for information pertinent to emergency procedures and your role in the event of a drill or emergency. Under no circumstances, are you to leave the students alone unless properly relieved of your duties.

A substitute teacher placed in a long-term assignment may call for assistance from appropriate school services consultants through the campus principal. You become the teacher of record.

The substitute teacher should not receive money from students unless instructed to do so. If money is collected, he/she should deposit it with a school secretary before leaving the building. Substitute teachers should not lend students money for any purpose. If a substitute teacher has

occasion to confiscate an item of value from any student; e.g., pager, cellular telephones **the substitute teacher is responsible for the article** until it is turned into the principal.

The substitute teacher **shall not leave the building** during the school day without permission from the principal or designated representative.

A short summary of the day's activities should be prepared by the substitute teacher and left in the Lesson Plan Folder for review by the regular teacher.

The substitute teacher shall not read a personal book while on duty or use personal computer or electronic equipment. You are there to conduct a period of instruction. Follow the lesson plan. If no lesson plan is available, contact the School Principal or Designee, so they are aware of the material you are using. Do not use cellular telephones with cameras while at school. You cannot take a picture of a student, even if he/she agrees to it. The school principal or designee is the only ones with the information and permits to take pictures or film students.
The substitute teacher should attend faculty or grade level meetings if requested to do so by the principal or designated representative.

The substitute teacher is expected to dress in a manner that reflects professional status and aims to reinforce the student dress code. Specific dress code guidelines may be in place at the campus or office level. A clear distinction should be made between who is the teacher and the student. You are the supervisor in charge, dress appropriately. An employee's dress and grooming shall be clean cut, neat, in a manner appropriate for his or her assignment, and in

accordance with any additional standards established by his or her supervisor and approved by the Superintendent.

The substitute teacher is required to sign in and sign out with the school secretary for payroll documentation purposes.

The substitute teacher shall not contact parents or send notes home with students.

Professional Ethics

The substitute teacher has a professional obligation to behave like the regular classroom teacher and shall use caution in expressing personal opinions.

Under no circumstances, shall a substitute teacher criticize a District Employee or a student in the presence of school personnel or students.

The substitute teacher must avoid comparing one school with another or comparing the children in one school with those in another.

Schools exist for the students' benefit. The first obligation of the substitute is to maintain a sage and orderly learning environment for students.

Be prompt and businesslike in making and keeping the agreement to work. Complaints, comments, and/or questions should be directed to the principal.

Safety

Policy CK series

The district has developed and promotes a comprehensive program to ensure the safety of its employees, students, and visitors. The safety program includes guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies and activities to help reduce the frequency of accidents and injuries.

To prevent or minimize injuries to employees, coworkers, and students and to protect and conserve district equipment, employees must comply with the following requirements:

- Observe all safety rules.
- Keep work areas clean and orderly at all times.
- Immediately report all accidents to their supervisor.
- Operate only equipment or machines for which they have training and authorization.

While driving on district business, employees are required to abide by all state and local traffic laws. Employees driving on district business are prohibited from texting and using other electronic devices that require both visual and manual attention while the vehicle is in motion. Employees will exercise care and sound judgment on whether to use hands-free technology while the vehicle is in motion.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues can contact Amalia Munoz, Business Manager, at 956-262-4755.

Possession of Firearms and Weapons

Policies DH, FNCG, GKA

Employees, visitors, and students, including those with a license to carry a handgun, are prohibited from bringing firearms, knives, clubs, or other prohibited weapons onto school premises (i.e., building or portion of a building) or any grounds or building where a school-sponsored activity takes place. A person, including an employee, who holds a license to carry a handgun may transport or store a handgun or other firearm or ammunition in a locked vehicle in a parking lot, garage, or other district provided parking area, provided the handgun or firearm or ammunition is properly stored, and not in plain view. To ensure the safety of all persons, employees who observe or suspect a violation of the district's weapons policy should report it to their supervisor or call Veronica Torres, Assistant Superintendent of Support Services, immediately.

Student Illness or Accident

If a student becomes ill or suffers an accident while under the supervision of the substitute teacher, the student shall be escorted to the nurse's office. If the situation appears serious, do not move the student. Send for the nurse or principal. A substitute teacher shall **never administer** any sort of medication to a student.

Fire and Emergency Drills

The substitute teacher should be familiar with emergency drill procedures and lead the class in proper participation during a drill or emergency situation. Upon checking in for his/her assignment for the day, the substitute teacher should obtain instructions from campus administration of the procedures for emergencies and/or drills.

Classroom Instruction

The substitute teacher is responsible on behalf of the regular teacher for all students, equipment, and materials assigned to the regular teacher. When you arrive at your classroom do a cursory inventory of the items on hand.

The substitute teacher shall make every attempt to administer the lesson plan of the regular classroom teacher. Substitute Teaching is not a babysitting job. If no lesson plan is available ask campus administration for the emergency lesson plans that teachers should have available. The

emergency lesson plan and activities may be kept in the school's office. If no emergency lesson plan is available either ask for assistance from campus administration or the designee.

The substitute teacher should arrange for a conference with the principal about an issue or concern regarding a specific student. The school principal or designee would be making the pertinent decision.

The substitute teacher must complete one classroom assignment before starting another classroom assignment. If no classroom assignment is available, contact other teachers for guidance on current assignments due by the type of class.

The substitute teacher should not assign written work and leave it to be graded, except by request of the regular teacher. Any written work assigned beyond the lesson plans of the regular teacher should be graded and left for the teacher to review. On long-term assignments such as work should be graded and recorded unless otherwise directed.

Substitute teachers should refrain from discussing topics (including personal anecodotes) that are not relevant to the day's lesson plan.

In addition to the general information given above, the substitute teacher is expected to comply with assignment-related instructions from the principal or designee.

Discipline

District expectations for discipline and classroom management are expressed through policy and the opening 3-R Discipline Program: Rules, Responsiblility, and Respect. Training in conflict resolution techniques are available and may be provided through the Office of Organizational Development. Upon arrival at the campus, the substitute teacher must request, obtain and review a copy of the school's campus policy on discipline and copy of the classroom management plan. The substitute teacher shall never administer corporal punishment to any student. This is ground for legal action against the substitute teacher. **DO NOT TOUCH A STUDENT**.

The substitute teacher is expected to maintain a level of student discipline in the classroom, which is conducive to good learning. The District's 3-R Discipline Program: Rules, Responsibility, Respect support zero tolerance of disruptive behaviors. A substitute teacher may, send a discipline referral slip, send a student to the principal's office. This action could have serious consequences for the student. A student may be sent to the office with a request that the principal come to the classroom. **The substitute should not leave the class unattedned**. The substitute should check with school's office for the campus guidelines that pertain to handling discipline referrals. Explicit explanation and direction, plus fair, faie treatment of all students generally diffuses most disciplinary problems in the classroom.

Student Issues

Student Records *Policy FL*

Student records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use. Employees should take precautions to maintain the confidentiality of all student records. The following people are the only people who have general access to a student's records:

- Parents: Married, separated, or divorced unless parental rights have been legally terminated and the school has been given a copy of the court order terminating parental rights
- The student: The rights of parents transfer to a student who turns 18 or is enrolled in an institution of post-secondary education. A district is not prohibited from granting the student access to the student's records before this time.
- School officials with legitimate educational interests

The student handbook provides parents and students with detailed information on student records. Parents or students who want to review student records should be directed to the Campus Principal for assistance.

Administering Medication to Students

Policy FFAC

Only designated employees may administer prescription medication, nonprescription medication, and herbal or dietary supplements to students. Exceptions apply to the self-administration of asthma medication, medication for anaphylaxis (e.g., EpiPen®), and medication for diabetes management, if the medication is self-administered in accordance with district policy and procedures. A student who must take any other medication during the school day must bring a written request from his or her parent and the medicine in its original, properly labeled container. Contact the principal or school nurse for information on procedures that must be followed when administering medication to students.