

PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK

School Year 2026-2027

Choctaw Tribal Schools

**Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
Cyrus Ben, Tribal Chief**

Approved by MBCI Tribal Council Resolution: CHO-26-081

You can find us on the internet at
www.choctawtribalschools.com

Choctaw Tribal Council

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Bogue Homa
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Conehatta
Hilda Nickey*
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Red Water
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Samuel John

Standing Pine
Lalania Denson*
Richard Sockey

Tucker
Demando Mingo**
Dorothy Wilson

*Member of Tribal Council Committee on Education

**Chairperson of Tribal Council Committee on Education

This handbook applies to all schools of the Choctaw Tribal Schools System unless specifically noted otherwise, including all schools/programs/athletic activities held during non-instructional times (after school, evenings, weekends, and holidays), and all school/program/athletic activities during all summer programs.

This handbook was designed as a guide to the school policies and procedures of our school district. We encourage you to sign up for the parent portal and alert notification system, and check out our social media pages to stay informed of school events.

We also encourage you to email your child's teacher as needed. We hope you will utilize all of the communication pieces offered as we work to increase two-way communication with parents.

Our goal is to keep parents informed and involved in our partnership to provide the best educational experience possible for your children. We are looking forward to another wonderful year!

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Choctaw Tribal Schools
P.O Box 6008
122 Division of Schools Drive
Choctaw, MS 39350
Phone: 601.650.7302 / Fax: 601.656.9454

Bogue Chitto Elementary School

13241 Hwy 491 North
Philadelphia, MS 39350
Phone: 601.389.1000 / Fax: 601-389-1002
Principal: Dr. Greg Carlyle
greg.carlyle@choctawtribalschools.com

Red Water Elementary School

107 Braves Blvd.
Carthage, MS 39051
Phone: 601.267.8500 / Fax: 601.267.1606
Principal: Elter Wilson
elter.wilson@choctawtribalschools.com

Choctaw Central High School

12780 Hwy 16 West
Choctaw, MS 39350
Phone: 601.663.7777 / Fax: 601.663.7776
Principal: Alaric Keams
alaric.keams@choctawtribalschools.com

Standing Pine Elementary School

538 Hwy 487 East
Carthage, MS 39051
Phone: 601.267.9225 / Fax: 601.267.9129
Principal: Linda Peoples
linda.peoples@choctawtribalschools.com

Choctaw Central Middle School

12780 Hwy 16 West
Choctaw, MS 39350
Phone: 601.663.7777 / Fax: 601.663.7776
Principal: Shannon Smith
shannon.smith@choctawtribalschools.com

Tucker Elementary School

126 East Tucker Circle
Philadelphia, MS 39350
Phone: 601.656.8775 / Fax: 601.656.9341
Principal: Elijah Ben
elijah.ben@choctawtribalschools.com

Conehatta Elementary School

851 Tushka Dr.
Conehatta, MS 39057
Phone: 601.775.8254 / Fax: 601.775.9229
Principal: Brian Parkman
brian.parkman@choctawtribalschools.com

Choctaw Career Technical Education Center

12780 Hwy 16 West
Choctaw, MS 39350
Phone: 601.663.7801 / Fax: 601.663.7840
Assistant Principal: Daniel Thomas
daniel.thomas@choctawtribalschools.com

Pearl River Elementary School

470 Industrial Rd.
Choctaw, MS 39350
Phone: 601.656.9051 / Fax: 601.656.9054
Principal: Suzanne Hyatt
suzanne.hyatt@choctawtribalschools.com

Choctaw Virtual Learning Center

390 Industrial Rd.
Choctaw, MS 39350
Phone: 601.663.7928
Administrator: Nell Adkins
nell.adkins@choctawtribalschools.com

Organizational Statement and Directory

The administrative head of the Choctaw Tribal School System is the Tribal Chief of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. The Tribal Council, particularly through the Committee on Education, determines policy for the Department of Schools and empowers the Director of Schools to execute policy to provide leadership and management for the school system. Annually, the Choctaw Tribal School System requests accreditation from the Mississippi Department of Education as a nonpublic school. The Department of Schools maintains a strong support office to provide technical coordination of all school services. Each local school is led by a Principal who handles the day-to-day supervision of all facets of local school operation. At each school, the Local Advisory Committee On Schools (LACOS) serves as a committee of parents/guardians and interested community members who meet with the local school administration in an advisory capacity for the hiring of school employees and the discussion of all aspects of the school program.

Director of Schools.....	650-7667
Assistant Director of Schools.....	663-7662
Department of Schools.....	650-7302
School Business Office.....	650-7302
Exceptional Education Office.....	663-7643
District Registrar's Office.....	650-7371/650-7322
District Food Services Office.....	663-7863
District Maintenance Office.....	656.6612
District Transportation Office.....	650-9211
Dormitory.....	650-7311
Parent/Education Center.....	656-5724
Bogue Chitto Elementary.....	389-1000
Conehatta Elementary.....	775-8254
Pearl River Elementary.....	656-9051
Red Water Elementary.....	267-8500
Standing Pine Elementary.....	267-9225
Tucker Elementary.....	656-8775
NASA Teacher Enhancement Center.....	663-7771
Choctaw Central Middle School.....	663-7777, ext 2
Choctaw Central High School.....	663-7777, ext 1
Choctaw Career Technical Center.....	663-7802
Choctaw Alternative Education Center.....	663-7777
Tribal Office.....	656-5251
Tribal Insurance Office.....	650-1579

Our Motto, Vision, and Goals

Our Motto

Alla Momat Ikkana Chih
(All Children Will Learn)

Our Vision

In the pursuit of excellence and believing that Alla momat ikkana chih, all children will learn, Choctaw Tribal Schools strive to provide a healthy, safe, community-based, culturally relevant, and inspiring learning environment for Native American learners.

Our Purpose

The Choctaw Tribal School System, in partnership with the families and communities, will educate and inspire all students to become responsible, contributing citizens of their local and global community.

Our Goals

- Increase the rigor of the curriculum and assessment system and the use of technology
- Raise achievement levels for all students and close the gap between district and national achievement levels
- Provide early learning experiences that increase opportunities for students to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally
- Develop cultural pride and knowledge of Choctaw language and cultural heritage
- Reduce dropout rate and increase the graduation rate
- Maintain a school campus where students are safe and parents feel welcomed, informed, and involved

Believing all children will learn, we commit to...

- Creating an educational environment that will challenge, inspire, and excite students
- Preparing all students to reach their fullest potential
- Creating a positive school climate that is fostered by caring individuals who model respect and set high expectations for students
- Providing instruction and activities for development of mental, physical, social, and emotional well-being of students.

History

The Choctaw Indian Reservation consists of 35,000 acres of trust land scattered over seven counties in east central Mississippi. The over 11,000 members of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians live in the eight reservation communities of Bogue Chitto, Bogue Homa, Conehatta, Crystal Ridge, Pearl River (the site of tribal headquarters, the industrial park, Pearl River Resort, the health center/hospital, and other tribal services), Red Water, Standing Pine, and Tucker.

Members of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians are descendants of the proud Choctaw individuals who refused to be removed to Oklahoma in the 1830's. For nearly 150 years, most Mississippi Choctaws lived in isolation and poverty with little or no access to education. No schools existed for Choctaw students prior to the 1920's and 1930's, when the Bureau of Indian Affairs built elementary schools. Choctaw Central High School was constructed in 1963. Before that time, segregation prohibited attendance by Choctaw students in either the black or white Mississippi public schools. Choctaw students who wished to attend high school had to attend federal boarding schools in North Carolina, Oklahoma, or Kansas; few did so. Most tribal members worked as sharecroppers or agricultural laborers and were only seasonally employed. Virtually all tribal business was managed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Indian Health Service officials.

In the mid-1960's, the tribe determined to improve its circumstances and began to work toward economic and governmental independence. Tribal leadership provided by the Tribal Chief and the seventeen-member Tribal Council (representatives elected from each of the Choctaw communities) has enabled the establishment of a centralized system of self-government that provides comprehensive health, education, social, law enforcement, courts, housing, and the economic development services.

In the 1980's the U.S. Congress passed two significant laws that opened the door for the Tribe to take control of its own educational programs – the Indian Self-Determination Act (PL 93-638) and the Tribally Controlled Schools Act (PL 100-297). In 1988, with the Choctaw Tribal Council as the official school board, the Tribe contracted from the Bureau of Indian Affairs all operations of the tribal schools and today continues to administer the schools as a BIA grant-funded school system, including six elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school. The school system reports administratively to the South and Eastern States Education Office of the Bureau of Indian Education in Nashville, Tennessee, and to the office of the BIE Director in Washington, D.C. The Bureau of Indian Education is considered a “state” education agency by the U.S. Department of Education. The Choctaw Tribal Schools must fully comply with all federal requirements for Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), special education, and other federal programs. As Bureau of Indian Education funded schools, enrollment in the Tribal Schools is limited to students who hold a BIA Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood of at least one-quarter.

Welcome

Halító!

Holisso ápisa ilappako falámat hash áyala ka yakókih oklah il áchih. Oklah í chi písa kat hapi ná yokpah.
Hapi Chahta immi hicha Chahta annopa átokma atóksalíchit oklah kil okchalíchih.

Hello!

We say thank you for coming back to this school. We are happy to see you. Let us work on keeping our Choctaw culture and Choctaw language alive.

We are the schools of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, and we are deeply proud of the unique heritage that is ours. Our schools are important places for learning about grammar, reading, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, and sportsmanship. They are also very important places for learning about the Choctaw language and culture. We hope that every person associated with the Choctaw Tribal School System – students and staff, tribal members and non-tribal members – will all learn together about our rich Choctaw past, our vibrant Choctaw present, and our bright and shining Choctaw future!

The following is the “Pledge of Allegiance” in the Choctaw language:

United States of America i shapha hicha im áyalhtoka ya im áyalhilih,
Ná miya yakómika ohikíyah átoko,
Yakni moyyót Chihówa inotákah,
Itti filammichi iksho,
Oklah moyyóma kat yoka kiyoh,
Hicha ná ittim áyalhpisáchih.

(We thank the Choctaw Language Program for providing these Choctaw translations.)

Choctaw Tribal Schools

2026-2027 Calendar

Approved 4/14/26, CHO 26-055

July 28 - CCMS/CCHS Staff Prof Dev
July 29-30 - Staff Prof Dev
1st Semester (90 student days)
July 31 - Staff Work Day
Aug 3 - Student's 1st Day
Aug 14 - Nanih Waiya Day
Aug 26 - Early Release
Sep 7 - Labor Day Holiday
Sep 8 - Progress Reports
Sep 25 - American Indian Day Holiday
Oct 2 - End 1st Term
Oct 5 - Begin Second Term
Oct 12 - Fall Break
Oct 13 - Comm Rel/Report Cards
Oct 28 - Early Release
Nov 9 - Progress Reports
Nov 11 - Veteran's Day Holiday
Nov 23-27 - Thanksgiving Holidays
Dec 18 - End 2nd Term/60% Day for Students
Dec 21-Jan 1 - Christmas Holidays
2nd Semester (90 Student Days)
Jan 4 - Staff Professional Development
Jan 5 - Second Semester Begins for students
Jan 11 - Comm Rel/Report Cards
Jan 18 - MLK Holiday
Feb 8 - Progress Reports
Feb 15 - President's Day Holiday
Feb 24 - Early Release
Mar 12 - End 3rd Term
Mar 15-19 - Spring Holidays
Mar 22 - Begin 4th Term
Mar 26 - Good Friday Holiday
Mar 29 - Comm Rel/Rep Cards
Apr 19 - Progress Reports
Apr 21 - Early Release
May 20 - End 4th Term
May 20 - 60% Day/Last Day for Students
May 21 - Staff Work Day - Last day for Teachers

Early Release Days for Students at 2pm	
August 26, 2026	February 24, 2027
October 28, 2026	April 21, 2027

2026						
August						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					
20 Instructional Days						
22 Contract Days						
September						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			
20 Instructional Days						
22 Contract Days						
October						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
21 Instructional Days						
22 Contract Days						
November						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					
15 Instructional Days						
21 Contract Days						
December						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		
14 Instructional Days						
23 Contract Days						

2027						
January						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						
18 Instructional Days						
20 Contract Days						
February						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						
19 Instructional Days						
20 Contract Days						
March						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			
17 Instructional Days						
23 Contract Days						
April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	
22 Instructional Days						
22 Contract Days						
May						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					
14 Instructional Days						
15 Contract Days						

180	Student instructional Days
11	Federal/Tribal Holidays
17	School Holidays
2	Staff Work Days
210	Teacher Contract Days

July 28 - Prof Dev, Paid Stipend for CCMS/CCHS, 210-day certified only
 July 29 - Prof Dev, Paid Stipend for all schools, 210-day certified only
 July 30 - Prof Dev, Paid Stipend for all schools, 210-day certified and non-certified
 Jan 4 - Prof Dev, Paid Stipend for all schools, 210-day certified and non-certified

A. STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Eligibility for Enrollment

To be eligible to enroll in the Choctaw Tribal Schools (CTS) a student must be a member of, or is at least one-fourth (1/4) degree Indian blood descendant of a member of, a tribe that is eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United States through the Bureau of Indian Affairs to Indians because of their status as Indians. The Bureau of Indian Education has determined that a student is eligible where the student can demonstrate that they (1) are a member of a federally recognized tribe; (2) have at least one parent or grandparent who is an enrolled member of any federally recognized tribe; or (3) have one-fourth Indian blood from one or more federally recognized tribes. Provisional enrollment may be allowed for up to 30 days if awaiting documentation for enrollment requirement verification.

Any student who has faced an expulsion or suspension in another school district must complete the expulsion and/or suspension before they will be allowed to enter the Choctaw Tribal School System. According to BIE ISEP regulations, no student who has reached his or her twenty-first birthday may enroll or re-enroll in any programs at Choctaw Central High School.

Students who are nineteen years of age or over who are failing or not attending school, will be withdrawn from school and encouraged to pursue alternate forms of education. This will not be done until the school has notified both the parent/guardian and the student. The principal or the principal's designee will perform a documented attempt to make this notification in person at the student's residence. Students with disabilities may continue their enrollment at Choctaw Central High School based on the placement decision of their IEP Committee until they reach the age of 21.

Attendance Boundaries

The attendance boundaries for the Choctaw Tribal Schools are the same as the community boundaries established for the purpose of determining eligibility to vote in tribal elections, and transportation is limited to students living within the attendance boundaries. Choctaw parents or guardians who work at a tribal school in a community other than the one in which they reside may enroll their child/children in either the school in which they work or the school in their community of residence.

Any other request to enroll children in a tribal school, which is not in their community of residence, must have prior approval from the Tribal Chief. Requests for approval must be acquired from the principal's office of the school you wish your child to attend out of boundary. The principal must agree to the out of boundary enrollment and verify there is space for the out of boundary student. Students are not allowed to enroll in or attend an out-of-boundary school until approval is obtained.

Approved requests remain valid until the end of the school year for which approval was requested. Parents may only request approval for the current school year. Requests for the following school year may be made during the summer break. Approval will be revoked if the child is enrolled in another school, or if the parent or guardian receives written notification of the contrary. Parents or guardians of out of boundary students must notify the registrar of any address changes during the school year.

Terms of Student Enrollment

Any parent/guardian enrolling a student into the Choctaw Tribal School system agrees to items listed below, unless a letter is submitted to the school principal to opt out of the following conditions or programs:

1. Enrollment in Choctaw Language Class for maintenance and/or language restoration and enhancement for all students grades Pre-Kindergarten through 10th grade (Grades 11-12 optional).
2. Enrollment in the school messenger system in order for families to be notified of school closures and/or important school events, which is accessible by email or cell phone.

3. Log in access to the Parent Portal in order for parent/guardian to view grades and attendance for their student.
4. Publication of student photographs, work samples, information and student names in tribal publications or local newspapers.
5. Presentation of student photographs and work samples for educational conferences, workshops, classes, etc. that promote the school or district, with no use of student names.
6. Publication of student photographs and names on school and district websites and on official CTS social media.
7. Participation in health education pertaining to pregnancy prevention and sexually transmitted diseases.
8. Assume responsibility for damages to any resource (including but not limited to textbooks and technology equipment) issued to their student, if the item is intentionally damaged by the student at school or is removed from the school setting and lost or damaged away from school. Items that the parent/guardian do not plan to assume responsibility for should be returned to the school by the parent with a written notice of return that is signed by both the parent and a school official.

Enrollment Requirements

The student Enrollment Packet is an important source of information for the school office and ensures that tribal, state and federal regulations are met and required documentation is on file. A newly completed packet is required each year for each child in attendance. Part 1 of enrollment is completion of the CTS enrollment packet. Part 2 of the enrollment process is the completion of the USDA application for free and reduced meals. The meal application can be accessed on the CTS website under Food Services or at choctawtribalschools.strataapps.com. A student is not officially enrolled until Part 1 and Part 2 of the enrollment is completed. There are announced times allotted for school registration. Enrollment documents are available each year prior to the start of the school year.

On the first day of school, students without completed enrollment/registration packets will not be allowed to report to class until enrollment is completed. Students will not be allowed to participate in any extracurricular activities during the summer until enrollment/registration is completed. Students without completed enrollment documents will be kept in isolation at the school and unable to receive academic grades until their enrollment is completed. If the enrollment is not completed by the 10th day of school, the student will be dropped from school rolls and parents/guardians will be required to report to the school to complete enrollment forms before a child will be allowed to attend school and receive transportation services. The ISEP 10-day drop rule for lack of attendance is a truancy issue.

Guardians are only required to complete one enrollment packet per year, unless they transfer to another school. Please inform the office of any changes in student information throughout the year, most importantly changes in your address, work phone and emergency phone numbers.

Required Documents

Enrollment information may be obtained from the school counselor or registrar's office. The following documents must be on file for the student to be officially enrolled:

- Birth Certificate
- Social Security Card, or a completed application for a Social Security Identification Card
- Immunization Health Compliance Form, including 7th graders Tdap vaccination
- Indian Student Eligibility Certification Form (CDIB)
- Notarized letter of custody (if you are enrolling a child for whom you are not listed on the birth certificate) or court document
- Withdrawal Form and Grades from Previous School (if transfer student)
- BIE Student Enrollment Application Form (Parent/Guardian signature required)
- USDA application for free and reduced meals (all families must complete)
- After School Application Form, if applicable
- Pre-Kindergarten Only: An official withdrawal form from Day Care and Head Start programs administered by the Division of Early Childhood Education.

Transfers and Withdrawals

A student who transfers between schools within the district must do the following:

- Have parents or guardians fill out an official withdrawal form in the school counselor's office.
- Turn in all books.
- Pay any fines or damage costs.
- Complete necessary enrollment documents.
- Notarized letter of custody (a guardian not listed on the birth certificate) or a court document, if a custody change has occurred.
- Withdrawal Form and Grades from Previous School
- Notify school transportation of the change so that bus service can be arranged.

A school is not permitted to hold a student's record for any reason.

When a student transfers to the Choctaw Tribal School System, a letter will be sent to the former school requesting his or her cumulative folder or other records. All fines and/or damage fees must be paid, and all textbooks and library books must be returned prior to withdrawing.

When a student withdraws to attend a school outside the tribal school district, the cumulative folder will be forwarded to the District Registrar who will handle transfer of records. All exceptional education records will be forwarded by special education and gifted staff. All fines and/or damage fees must be paid, and all textbooks and library books must be returned prior to withdrawing.

Grade Placement Policy

When transferring from a graded school, students will be placed in the grade in which they are currently enrolled with all grades, attendance and mastery sheets being sent by their previous school to verify competencies mastered. Grades should be added to the teacher's gradebook as soon as the student transfers. When a student transfers into the Choctaw Tribal School System from an ungraded program, an unaccredited program, or a home-school program, it is the school system's responsibility to ensure that the student's grade-level placement is consistent with the student's educational achievement. In grades K-8, the counselor at the local school, in coordination with the school principal, will administer a **standardized placement test** to the student. The counselor and the principal will consider test results, work samples the student or the student's family may provide, and an interview with the student and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) to determine appropriate K-8 grade-level placement.

Enrollment for Homeless Students

Families experiencing homelessness can self-identify on the school enrollment application. School Counselors and Home-School Liaisons have been trained on how to identify and work with homeless students. Homeless students have specific rights through the McKinney-Vento Act. Some, but not all, are listed below:

- Students who are homeless may attend their school of origin or the school where they are temporarily residing.
- Parents or guardians of homeless students must be informed of educational and related opportunities.
- Students who are homeless may initially enroll without school, medical, or similar records.
- Students who are homeless have a right to transportation to school.
- Students are allowed categorical eligibility for free lunch.

Any questions regarding homeless enrollment or denial of enrollment or services should be forwarded in writing to the District Homeless Liaison, District Registrar Office or the Director of Schools.

B. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance in school is vital to your student's progress. The hands-on experiences, interventions, and group discussions that are missed are critical elements to enhancing a child's learning process. Maintaining regular attendance is critical to a successful academic experience for every child.

It is also important to school funding which is based on average daily membership. In an effort to communicate with parents, the school will send an automated call each morning notifying parents when their child has been marked absent for unknown or unexcused reasons. Whenever a student is absent (Excused or Unexcused) from school, the student is still expected to receive any instruction or material missed during that time as a first priority. Any time a student is tardy, the student MAY be pulled from elective courses, recess, activity, or extracurricular periods to ensure he/she is provided any material or instruction the student has missed so he/she is not left behind academically.

We strongly encourage you to schedule medical and dental appointments during school vacations or after school hours when possible. If this is a problem, please attempt to schedule appointments so your child can attend a majority portion of the school day. The Choctaw Tribal School System and the Mississippi Activities Association requires that students participating in extracurricular activities, such as sports, band, cheerleading, Spring Festivals, and other school activities, must attend classes on the day of the activity.

Compulsory Attendance and Truancy

Children who are age five (5) by September 1 and who have not attained the age of eighteen years on or before September 1 of the calendar year are mandated by tribal law to be in school.

According to the Choctaw Tribal Code Section 3-6-33, any parent, guardian, or custodian of a compulsory- school-age child who fails to send a child to school may be subject to fines and/or imprisonment. This also applies to Pre-K students when parents elect to enroll their child in the school program.

If the compulsory-school-age child has not been enrolled in school within 15 calendar days after the first day of the school year for the Choctaw Tribal Schools or such child has accumulated five (5) unexcused absences after the first day of the school year, the school staff will report such truancy to the School Attendance Officer and may report to Choctaw Social Services, if deemed appropriate. The principal or designated personnel will be responsible for assuring that the parent, guardian, or custodian of the child is contacted in person

Compulsory Attendance Waiver

Under extreme circumstances a student may request a 'Compulsory Attendance Waiver Request' in order to leave high school to attend adult education. To request a waiver, the parent and student must set up a meeting with the Director of Schools.

Arrival

Each school has arrival protocols for their students. If your student arrives on the bus, they will be directed to either enter their classroom, the school cafeteria, or a designated area for proper supervision. If your child does not ride a bus, please follow your school's procedure for proper drop off location to maintain utmost safety in the school bus drop off zones. Once a student has arrived on the school premises, he or she is not to "socialize" with any person who is not a student or staff member at the school without permission from the principal's office. Socializing means to talk to, get in the car with, or accept food and drinks from.

Length of School Day

School start times and schedules will be consistent unless otherwise notated.

All elementary schools:

Doors Open	7:30 a.m.
Breakfast	7:30 a.m. – 7:55 a.m.
School Begins	8:00 a.m. promptly
1 st Lunch	11:30 a.m.
2 nd Lunch	12:00 p.m.
Dismissal (PreK – 8)	3:00 p.m.

After School Dismissal	4:30 p.m.
Office Hours	
Monday – Thursday	7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Friday	7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Choctaw Central Middle School and Choctaw Central High School:

Doors Open	7:30 a.m.
Breakfast	7:30 a.m. – 7:50 a.m.
School Begins	7:50 a.m. promptly
CCMS	
7 th Grade Lunch	11:05 a.m.
8 th Grade Lunch	11:35 a.m.
CCHS	
1 st Lunch	11:30 a.m.
2 nd Lunch	12:00 p.m.
3 rd Lunch	12:30 p.m.
Dismissal	3:15 p.m.
After School Dismissal	4:30 p.m.
Office Hours	
Monday – Thursday	7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Friday	7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

The High School has special after school and occasional Saturday tutorial sessions that will be announced when offered.

Dismissal

Classes end at all elementary schools at 3:00 p.m. and at 3:15 p.m. at the high school and middle school. Students who ride buses will be supervised during dismissal and at the bus loading zone. Unless requests are made in writing in a timely manner, students will be picked up and dropped off at the home location listed on the student enrollment forms. *(See transportation section for more information about required procedures for bus route changes).*

Times of dismissal for the After School Program will be outlined in the After School Application. Students who are not picked up in a timely manner from the After School Program, may be dropped from attending the program. Parents will be advised of the program hours and required pick up times.

At Choctaw Central High School, seniors who have earned 20 or more credits before the beginning of their senior year may be allowed to end their school day after attending classes through third block each day (1:35 p.m.). Parents/guardians of such students must appear in person before the CCHS Principal to sign written permission for their child to leave school at the end of third block each day. Students are responsible for their own transportation and are not allowed to remain on campus after their approved end-of-day time. Students are encouraged to use this early dismissal as an opportunity to seek employment, career training, dual enrollment in community college, or other advancement options.

Arriving Late to School

Instruction begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. for all elementary schools and at 7:50 a.m. for CCHS and CCMS.

Being late to school is very disruptive to your child's morning routine as well as those of his/her classmates and can also be a safety issue. Please assist us in meeting your child's educational needs by making sure your child is at school on time. If arriving after the listed start time, a student will have a late check-in recorded (either excused or unexcused). A parent/guardian must bring the student to the office to sign in when the student is arriving after 8:30 a.m. Students who are late due to a late school bus or problems with breakfast service in the school cafeteria will be marked Exempt. Students are expected to be on time to school and classes.

The elementary schools record daily attendance; therefore, arriving late results in a student being counted for a late check-in. Each late check-in to school and each early check-out prior to dismissal add up to total time absent which can result in truancy issues. Please work with your children to minimize late check-ins and early check-outs.

Choctaw Central Middle and High School record period absences; therefore, arriving to school late is recorded as a late check-in to first period and being late to all other classes is recorded as a period tardy. Checking out at CCMS or CCHS before dismissal will result in a recorded absence for the periods missed. All late check-ins and period absences will accumulate toward total days missed, which may lead to truancy issues. Please discuss with your child about not only being on time for school in the morning, but to each class period.

Any time a student is late to school, the student MAY be pulled from elective courses, recess, activity or extracurricular periods to ensure he/she is provided any material or instruction missed so he/she is not left behind academically.

Habitually being late to school could lead to parent conferences, disciplinary action, and/or a referral to Children and Family Services.

Period Tardies – CCHS/CCMS

Students are allowed ample time between classes. Students who are not in class when the tardy bell rings will be assigned a period tardy (excused or unexcused). Students with excessive unexcused period tardies are subject to disciplinary action as outlined below:

4th Tardy = Documented warning with a student/principal conference and parent contact

8th Tardy = One day of In-School Suspension and parent contact

12th Tardy = Two days of In-School Suspension or community service

16th Tardy = Three days of In-School Suspension or community service

20th Tardy = One day of Out-of-School Suspension

After the 20th tardy, discipline will be at the discretion of the school, up to expulsion, if a student continues to display chronic tardiness.

Community service will be at the principal's discretion and with full cooperation of the parent/guardian.

Tardies accumulate for the entire school year; tardy counts do not start over each 9 weeks or semester.

Sign Out / Checkout Procedure

All students must be signed out through the office to be dismissed prior to the end of the school day. If you will be picking your child up during the school day, please notify the office with a note sent to school explaining the reason for the checkout, call the office with the information, or come to the office to make staff aware of the reason your child will be leaving. The school attendance clerk will be responsible for recording student check in/out in the student information system, which will include a record in the system of the name of the person who checks out the student.

- Secretarial staff will release your child after you have signed them out according to the release forms you fill out in the enrollment packet. As a safety and security measure, any person checking out a student may be asked to provide photo identification and/or proof of age before a student is released. Any person checking out a student must be listed as an emergency contact on the enrollment form and be at least 18 years old. If there is any question regarding a student's safety, checkout of a student may be denied.
- Eighteen-year-old students may not check themselves out from school. A student's parent/guardian must provide approval in writing for the student to check out that must be

approved by the principal. As long as an individual is a student enrolled in the tribal schools, parent/guardian permission is required for checkout.

- Absences resulting from late check-in or early check-out will be determined as excused or unexcused in accordance with policy. Any absence for an unexcused reason results in a maximum grade of 65%/D when work is made up in a timely manner.
- Checking out to leave campus for lunch is not an excused absence. Check-outs on a regular basis may result in truancy charges.

Absence from School

A student is expected to attend school on the days that school is open. When the student must be absent from school, the student must make up the work missed within three (3) school days, unless the absence was an extended one and the time framed for completion of the work will be given in writing to the student. Whenever a student is absent (excused or unexcused) from school, the student is still expected to receive any instruction or material missed during that time as a first priority. Any time a student is absent, the student MAY be pulled from elective courses, recess, activity or extracurricular periods to ensure he/she is provided any material or instruction the student has missed so he/she is not left behind academically.

Approved school activities allow for the school to count the student present. Such activities may include field trips, athletic contests, student conventions, musical festivals, science fairs, academic competitions, and similar activities. These times away from school do not count toward a student's number of absences for the semester or year. Students are given opportunity to make up all work in the same time frame as classmates. Any work that is turned in late may receive a maximum grade of 65%/D.

Excused Absences

We are required to document the reason for every student absence; therefore, calls or home visits may be made to the homes of those students whose parents/guardians have not called or notified the school in writing regarding their child's absence. Approved absences are outlined below. All other absences will be recorded as unexcused. When the student must be absent from school, the parents must provide proof of an excused absence as outlined below:

1. Medical (No more than 9 days) - A medical absence is defined as any absence resulting from illness, injury, or medical/dental appointment. All medical absences must be supported by a medical note from a doctor. After nine (9) medically excused days from a doctor during the school year, a letter will be required to verify the medical condition of the student to support further excused absences. Medical isolation, as ordered by a health official and homebound status fall under medical absence. Refer to homebound service information under Student Services.
2. Serious illness/Death in the immediate family (3 days) – Students are allowed three (3) excused days of absence in the event of a serious illness or death of a student's immediate family member. The immediate family is defined as children, spouse, grandparents, parents, or brothers and sisters, including stepbrothers and stepsisters. Any days past the three (3) excused days will fall under parental excuses if a student has not already been absent those days in a semester. If a student has exceeded the number of allowable notes from a parent, then those days will be counted as unexcused absences, unless excused by the principal in his/her discretion due to cultural considerations.
3. Parental (6 days) - Students shall be allowed three (3) days per semester (total of 6 days per year) for which a parent can request an excuse for the student's absence from school. The note must be signed by the parent and include home and work phone numbers for verification. No more than three (3) days in a semester will be excused based on parental notes. Parental notes must be received within three (3) days of the student's return to school or they will be considered unexcused. Extenuating circumstances will be considered by the school leadership team to determine if extended absences are needed per the request.

4. Court Proceedings – An absence is excused when it results from the attendance of the student at the proceedings of a court or an administrative tribunal if such child is a party to the action or under subpoena as witness. A copy of the subpoena or summons must be submitted to the school principal.
5. Administrative Approval - Other absences include any activity approved in advance by the principal or Director of Schools. These may include, but are not limited to, valid educational opportunities, educational travel, and religious events but must be approved before the absence occurs. Even though an absence is excused, these days are still counted as absences and all work must be made up within three days of a student's return to school.

Documentation for all absences must be submitted within three (3) school days of a student's return to school. Students may not wait until the end of the grading period to bring in excuses for earlier absences. If you are unsure of your child's attendance status, please contact the school or access the parent portal for attendance details. We want to work with you to ensure all attendance is recorded properly. Even if the student has an excused absence, they may receive a grade of "zero" if they do not make up the work according to policy and timelines given. Teachers will work with parents and students to ensure that they understand the grading policy and the timelines for makeup work.

Unexcused Absences

- Absences due to Out-of-School Suspension will be considered unexcused.
- Absences in which students are checked out from school without explanation will be recorded as unexcused.
- Absences in which students miss school with no parental notification to the school and which no medical excuse is provided will be recorded as unexcused.
- Any student with an unexcused checkout or absence will be given the opportunity to receive a maximum grade of 65%/D for any graded assignments or tests he or she missed during that period of absence.
- At five (5) unexcused absences in a 9-week period, any student involved in any extracurricular activities can be removed from that activity for a period of time or for the remainder of the year (per extracurricular participant activity policy).

Students are encouraged to make up all work missed due to absences, whether excused or unexcused, in order to learn and keep up with coursework. Whenever a student is absent (excused or unexcused) from school, the student is still expected to receive any instruction or material missed during that time as a first priority. Any time a student is absent, the student MAY be pulled from elective courses, recess, activity or extracurricular periods to ensure he/she is provided any material or instruction the student has missed so he/she is not left behind academically.

At three (3) unexcused accumulated absences, teachers and designated attendance staff are to contact the parent/guardian, counselor, and parent liaison. At five (5) unexcused accumulated absences the teacher and/or attendance staff and/or parent liaison is to make a documented home visit or parent conference **AND** the designated attendance staff will send a referral to the School Attendance Officer.

All further absences will be monitored by teacher, designated attendance staff, and parent liaison. At ten (10) accumulated unexcused absences, a second documented home visit or school conference with the parent will be conducted. All contacts will be documented per policy in the student information system. Designated school staff will continue to monitor, and a second referral will be sent to the School Attendance Officer.

Absences Due to Suspension

Absences due to suspension are always unexcused and can impact a student's grades. Please help your child and the school staff to improve your child's behavior in order to minimize suspensions from school.

School Attendance Officer

The School Attendance Officer will investigate absence reports and shall have the following responsibilities:

- Receive referrals from appropriate school officials, community agencies, and tribal members of compulsory-school-age children not attending school.
- Investigate all cases of nonattendance and unlawful absences by compulsory-school-age children not enrolled in school.
- Cooperate with public and tribal agencies or other courts of competent jurisdiction to assure that the Compulsory Attendance Code is enforced equally for reservation families whose children are enrolled in tribal, public, or private schools.
- Take responsibility for filing a petition with the tribal court **against parent/guardian and/or students, when necessary**, when attendance issues are not resolved with compulsory-school age students. Attendance issues include students who are regularly check-in late to school for unexcused reasons, and check-out early for unexcused reasons. Not being in school for unexcused reasons means a student is truant.
- Record home visits and any other correspondence to parent, guardian, or custodian of a compulsory- school-age child in the school database system.
- Communicate with parent/guardian or truant student within two (2) weeks of the school referral and file a petition with the tribal court within one (1) week after contact, if any additional unexcused absences occur. In addition, run daily reports to file immediate petitions when a student has additional unexcused absences.
- Communicate bi-weekly with each school principal to discuss attendance issues.
- Prepare a monthly report of petitions filed to the court to give each school principal and then update status of each of the petitions on future monthly reports to the principal.
- As requested, prepare a **monthly report** of all excessive absences (without the names of students listed) and submit to the Director of Schools and/or to the Chairperson for the Tribal Council Committee on Education.
- The School Attendance Officer has legal authority to detain a student who is away from school without authorization and to hold that student until parents/guardians or Law Enforcement arrives to pick-up the child.

C. INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

The Choctaw Tribal School District utilizes the Mississippi College and Career Standards (MCCRS) in PreK – 12th grade. MCCRS have been adopted by the Mississippi Department of Education and approved by the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). The MCCRS defines what students should know and be able to do in the core subjects (English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies) to be ready for college and the workforce.

The Choctaw Tribal Schools believe that all children will learn (*Alla Mqmat Ikkana Chih*) and receive challenging materials that will enable them to reach their full potential. Pre-K – 3rd grade students receive instruction in Choctaw Language/Culture in the Choctaw Language classroom from a certified Choctaw Language Instructor. The instructional aide, supported by the classroom teacher, provides additional learning opportunities for Choctaw Language/Culture in grades Pre-K – 8. English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Art instruction are provided by the classroom teacher and will include instructional technology and real-world connections through a variety of teaching strategies.

Each student will keep a data notebook containing information about classwork, writing assignments, formative assessments, and standardized test results. The student data notebook will provide students, parents, teachers, and administrators with an overview of student progress and achievement.

The Curriculum Department of Choctaw Tribal Schools works with teachers to ensure alignment of the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards with curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The

Curriculum Department implements and oversees educational programs, ensuring they align with standards, meet student needs, and prepare students for success by developing materials, training teachers, analyzing data, and constantly evaluating and updating instructional strategies and resources.

Grading Policy

Students in grades 1-12, receive numerical grades on their report cards at the end of each nine-week grading period. Teachers are not authorized to recalculate previous nine weeks grades to help a student improve their grades or achieve a passing grade.

Letter grades correspond with numerical averages as follows:

A	90 - 100	Excellent Achievement
B	80 - 89	Above Average Achievement
C	70 - 79	Average Achievement
D	65 - 69	Below Average Achievement
F	64 and below	Failing Grade, Insufficient Achievement

Term averages will be recorded on report cards as number grades.

Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students and 1st-6th Grade students (ONLY in activity courses such as Physical Education, Art, Music and Computer) attending the Choctaw Tribal Schools receive a report of student achievement at the end of each nine weeks using the following scale:

E	90 - 100	Excellent
G	80 - 89	Good
S	70 - 79	Satisfactory
I	65 - 69	Improving
N	64 and below	Needs Improvement

Averaging Grades

The following is the district policy for averaging grades:

The daily average will consist of tests, projects, homework, and classwork.

Tests	55%
Classwork	35%
<u>Homework</u>	<u>10%</u>
	100%

Grades K-8

Semester grades will be the average of the two nine weeks' grades. The overall yearly average will be the average of the two final semester grades. No summative semester or end-of-year exam will be administered for course grading.

Mid-term Progress Reports will be given according to the school calendar. Each student will receive a progress report from his/her teacher to be taken home and signed by the parent or guardian.

Dates for progress reports are indicated on the school calendar and Progress Report grades can be accessed on the NASIS portal. Numerical grades will be given on progress reports according to the school grading scale.

Accelerated courses offered by distance learning through other agencies may have different grading policies. Contact your local curriculum office for more information.

Choctaw Central High School

The length of a regular one (1) credit course is two (2) nine weeks terms. The course mid-term grade is issued at the end of the first nine weeks. The course final grade is issued at the end of the second nine weeks; it is the average of the two (2) nine weeks' grades.

The length of a half (1/2) credit course is one (1) nine weeks term. The course mid-term grade is issued at 4 ½ weeks, or progress report period. The course final grade is issued at the end of the nine weeks.

Merit Days

Merit Days will be determined at the close of the first semester and second semester for any student in grades PreK-12 if they have met the following requirements:

1. Parent Approval – A parental approval form must be signed and on file with the school principal.
2. Student must not have had any suspensions due to disciplinary actions. Student must not have had more than three (3) office referrals per semester.
3. Student must maintain a minimum of an overall C average in all classes.
4. Student cannot have accrued more than three (3) unexcused absences or ten (10) late check-ins.

During the Merit Days period, students who meet all criteria will not be counted absent but will be exempt from school and are not expected to be in attendance. No more than three (3) days per semester will be designated as Merit Days.

Special Education Grading Policy

Students with disabilities are often able to achieve the same achievement levels as their on-grade level peers with specialized instruction from a variety of teachers and use of various research-based materials. When students are not functioning on grade level it is our commitment to keep parents/guardians informed of their students functioning level (as compared to their peers). The procedure used for reporting grades will be such that everyone involved in reporting and using grades will clearly understand that a special education grade for a course that is coded as a special education course with a high grade, does not necessarily mean that a disabling condition no longer exists or that the student is functioning on grade level.

Parents will be notified at the beginning of school of the grading and graduation procedures for students who are receiving accommodations or modifications to their curriculum content as listed in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Any disabled student who does not meet established course standards (whether regular or special education courses) may receive a failing grade. It is our intent to monitor grades carefully and work with the IEP team to revise services based on the needs of each student. By the 6th grade, a student's transition to high school will be considered in making decisions regarding Regular Diploma or Certificate of Life Skills. Student grades in regular content courses during 6th – 8th grades will have an impact on decisions made regarding graduation options.

MTSS / Response to Intervention (Rtl)

The Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a framework to help ALL students reach high standards in academics and behavior. MTSS is:

- A framework for effective problem solving to improve student outcomes.
- For ALL students including those that need enrichment.
- Flexible to meet the unique needs of districts and schools.
- Data informed and evidence based.
- Collaborative team-based decision making.
- A framework to make decisions about the need for further services.

The Goals of MTSS:

- Prevention oriented; knowing who needs support as early as possible each year and putting those supports in place.
- Implementing evidence-based interventions for all students and tailoring interventions based on student's needs.
- Using progress monitoring data to know when to make changes in instruction.

The Choctaw Tribal Schools will implement the Rtl process in an effort to improve student achievement and behavior. The Rtl process represents appropriate practices in educating students and will use a three-tier model – Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3.

Tier 1 – Quality instruction based on the College and Career Readiness Standards; school-wide efforts and practices available to all students. Students who are successful and making expected progress in the general education curriculum and are demonstrating social competence. Tier 1 data should indicate when a student is experiencing difficulty academically or behaviorally.

Tier 2 – Strategic/targeted intervention and supplemental instruction; designed for students that are struggling and not making expected progress in the general education curriculum or with behavioral expectations. These students may require small group instruction in the targeted area(s) of need.

Tier 3 – Intensive interventions and supplemental instruction; designed for students who are having difficulties with the grade-level objectives or behavioral expectations in the general education curriculum. Tier 3 interventions are implemented when data indicates that the student has failed to make progress at Tier 1 or 2. Educators begin to make decisions that may lead to further evaluation and identification for specialized services for individual students. **THIS TIER IS NOT SPECIAL EDUCATION.** Some students benefit from intensive interventions and are able to move back to Tiers 1 and 2.

The Tiers are not unidirectional; they are bidirectional. This means that a student can move from one Tier to another depending on the data collected by the classroom teacher(s). A child can remain in Tier 2 or Tier 3 until he/she graduates, if that is the best placement for the student and the student shows progress at that level.

Identification of Students (20 day)

All students in Kindergarten – Grade 8 shall be administered a screener at the beginning, mid-year, and end of the school year in order to identify any deficiencies in reading or mathematics. In addition to failure to make adequate progress following Tier 1 and Tier 2, students will be referred to the Teacher Support Team (TST) for interventions specified in the MTSS/RtI guidelines. Students will also be identified at the beginning of the year based on the following criteria:

- A. Grades K-3: A student has failed one (1) grade level.
- B. Grades 4 -12: A student has failed two (2) grade levels.
- C. A student scores at PL1 on the ELA or Mathematics MAAP assessment the previous year.

Referrals to the TST must be made within the first twenty (20) school days of a school year if the student meets any of the criteria as stated above. Schools must complete, at a minimum, documentation as required for all students in Tier 2 or Tier 3. All Tier 3 documentation must accompany the student's cumulative folder upon promotion or transfer to a new school.

Assessment and Districtwide Data Systems

The following assessments will be administered districtwide. The data reports from each will be used to make data-driven decisions during district, school-based (grade level), professional learning community, student, parent, and community-based meetings. Each report will be kept in data notebooks. The focus of each data report is to monitor student growth and proficiency levels.

Formative Assessments

Assessments	Grade Levels	Frequency/Time Period
STAR Early Literacy	Pre-K and K	3 times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring)
Pre-LAS	Pre-K	2 times per year (Fall, Spring)
District-Approved Benchmark Assessment	3 – 8	3 times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring)
District-Approved Benchmark Assessment	English II, Algebra I, Biology	1 time per semester course
i-Ready Diagnostic	K – 8	3 times per year (Fall, Winter, Spring)
Choctaw Lang. & Integration Project	K – 3	2 times per year (Fall, Spring)

Standardized Testing Program

The following BIE-approved assessments will be given in accordance with the Mississippi Department of Education assessment schedules and requirements. These tests are used in the determination of student progress and each school's academic accountability.

Assessments	Grade Levels	Frequency/Time Period
ACT*	11	Annually, during school hours
ACT WorkKeys	Year 2 C-TEC	2 times per year, during school hours
Mississippi Academic Assessment Program (MAAP)	3 rd – 8 th ELA, Math, Science (5 th /8 th)	Annually
Mississippi Academic Assessment Program – Alternate (MAAP-A)	3 rd – 8 th ELA, Math, Science (5 th /8 th), English II, Algebra I, Biology I	Annually
Mississippi Assessment Program End of Course (MAAP-EOC)	English II, Algebra I, Biology I	1 time per semester course

*The ACT measures College and Career Readiness of students before they enter the 12th grade. Students working toward diploma endorsements should complete additional exams required for those endorsements (See diploma options in Graduation Requirements).

Instructional Technology

Internet and network access are provided to the students and staff at Choctaw Tribal Schools. Computers, laptops, tablets, and other electronic technology are tools with which to perform research, retrieve information, compile data, and create documents related to education. Students are expected to report any problems with the technology equipment they have been assigned to use. Teachers will be responsible for educating students on safety related to Internet usage and are required to monitor student activity according to the policy. This will be documented in lesson plans.

The use of equipment, computers, network resources, and the internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in a cancellation of these privileges.

Network Etiquette

Users are expected to abide by the general accepted rules of network etiquette. These include but are not limited to the following:

- Be polite. Messages should not be abusive to others.
- Use appropriate language. Do not swear, use vulgarities or any other inappropriate language.
- Do not reveal addresses, credit card numbers, or phone numbers.
- Illegal activities are strictly forbidden.
- Electronic mail is not guaranteed to be private. System administrators have access to all mail.
- Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- Do not use the network in such a way that others' use of the network would be disrupted.

Users Agree to Abide by the Following:

- Use of the network must be in support of education and research.
- Users must not reveal their password or use other users' passwords.
- Users shall not damage computers, computer systems or computer networks, which include altering software components of a computer or system.
- Users are prohibited from transmitting or intentional receipt of hate mail, harassment, and other antisocial behaviors on the network, including cyberbullying.
- Users shall not use the network to access or process pornographic material, inappropriate text files, or any illegal activity.
- Users agree not to use the chat rooms.
- Users agree not to send chain letters.

- Students agree not to play games on the computers unless authorized by monitoring staff.
- Students shall not send, receive, or check personal E-mail, except with permission before or after school.

Computer Lab/Classroom Technology Usage:

- Staff members assigned to a group of students are responsible for monitoring and overseeing their network and internet activity.
- No food or drinks allowed around electronic devices.

Consequences of Unacceptable Use Are:

- Suspension and/or termination of network and internet privileges. And/or additional disciplinary action as determined at the administrative level regarding unacceptable language and/or behavior.
- And/or referral to law enforcement authorities for criminal or civil prosecution.

Technology Enhanced Instruction

Choctaw Tribal Schools believes in the benefits of technology enhanced instruction to assist our students in achieving challenging coursework to earn Carnegie units toward graduation. A minimum of 70 hours of instruction are provided for each half (.5) Carnegie unit credit offered or 140 hours for one (1) Carnegie unit credit; each program described below will meet these minimum number of instructional hours. **An exception to these hours would be any course taken as credit recovery** (see credit recovery section). Blended learning courses are defined as courses delivered through a hybrid instructional delivery model where students are provided face-to-face instruction in a classroom and in part a computer based, internet-connected learning environment in which a Mississippi-certified teacher who is an employee of the school is responsible for providing instruction and issuing the final grade.

Distance learning courses are defined as courses offered through a technology driven delivery model in which regularly scheduled real-time instruction occurs during the school day where students and instructors are not in the same place in which a Mississippi-certified teacher is responsible for providing instruction and issuing grades.

Online courses are defined as courses delivered through an interactive computer-based and internet connected learning environment, in which students are separated from their teacher by time or location or both and in which a Mississippi-certified teacher is responsible for providing instruction and issuing grades, which have previously been approved as an online course through the Mississippi Online Course Application (MOCA) process.

Credit Recovery Guidelines

Credit recovery is defined as a course-specific, skill-based learning opportunity for students who have previously been unsuccessful in mastering content/skills required to receive course credit. Applying for credit recovery is an alternative to repeating the entire course. A student must have completed and failed a course in order to qualify for enrollment in credit recovery.

Credit Recovery rules, regulations and processes include the following:

1. An application must be completed that includes parental consent and the school principal's signature, giving approval for enrollment.
2. A student in credit recovery must be enrolled at the school.
3. A student must have previously been enrolled in the full length of the course and received a failing grade which was recorded on the transcript.
4. Documentation must be provided which indicates which course standards the student must recover in order to receive credit. It is the responsibility of the student and the school staff to provide multiple pieces of classwork documentation and data points (e.g. portfolio, tutorial assessments) as evidence of the standards that the student has already mastered.
5. A credit recovery plan should be put in place that indicates the standards that the student has not yet mastered.

6. A student is limited to one calendar year to complete a credit recovery course, at which time the student would be dropped from the course and the student would need to enroll in the regular high school course and complete the entire course to get the credit.
7. A student is limited to enrolling in two (2) credit recovery courses at one time.
8. **A student may only receive the minimum passing grade according to the district grading scale of a 65%/D.**
9. A teacher may utilize direct instruction, an MDE approved online learning course, and/or supplemental computer assisted instruction in the credit recovery program.
10. A licensed teacher must supervise all delivery of instruction, ensure that all course standards were completed for the course based on the Mississippi College and Career Readiness Standards competencies and objectives, and issue the final credit recovery grade.
11. After the grade is issued, the Department head for the core subject must review the portfolio and graded work and then sign off that all course requirements have been satisfied, before the final grade is posted to the transcript.
12. Credit Recovery courses must be identified as a recovery course on the student transcript.

For more information, refer to the Approved Courses for Secondary Schools of Mississippi.

Kimihchi Program

The Kimihchi Program was developed to address the equitable needs of a specific sub-group of students who are academically behind to catch-up or those who have demonstrated high academic achievement and want to take extra classes to accelerate. These opportunities will be offered to students who are:

1. At least one (1) or more grade levels behind
2. Excelling academically
3. Must be recommended by the principal and the child study team.

The Kimihchi Program will take extra effort by the student in order to achieve. Students will be offered opportunities during the day to complete assignments, but additional time outside of school will be necessary for students to excel in this program. Parents/guardians will be notified and parental consent will be required for any student to participate in this program.

Homework

The Choctaw Tribal School System emphasizes the importance of daily homework assignments that are meaningful and appropriate for individual student learning. Homework is meant to develop individual work and study habits among all students. Parents are also encouraged to help their children manage their evening activities and television viewing so that adequate time for homework and learning is set aside each day. Students are also expected to read daily. Parents and family members' support and encouragement are important to your child's success. Please help him/her establish a routine for homework and provide a good work space in which to complete the work. Homework is extremely important to your child's progress as it reinforces and extends the classroom instruction.

Every student should do enough studying at home for successful achievement at school. No student in our school can do his/her school work satisfactorily without a sufficient amount of outside study. It is an impossibility to prepare all lessons at school – it cannot be done. A student should not depend upon his or her parents to do his or her homework. Homework counts as 10% of the grade average.

Textbooks and Fines

The school must follow the rules and regulations of the Mississippi State Textbook Commission regarding the issuing of textbooks. Textbooks will be issued to all students. Lost or damaged books must be paid for by the student or his/her parent/guardian before another is issued.

All fines **must be paid** so that student records may be cleared. Part of the school experience is learning to be responsible. All students are expected to return their textbooks or if a book is lost to pay for the replacement cost. Students who are unable to return the book at the end of the course will lose his or her privilege to engage in extracurricular activities (e.g. sports, band, cheerleading, school clubs, school

trips, field trips, dorm trips) until the book is returned or the debt is paid. Students will have the following alternatives for payment: (1) Working off the debt by being a custodian's assistant. This must be arranged with the principal with the parent/guardian agreeing. (2) The student or parent/guardian may pay the debt directly.

Awards Programs

Each school will honor students at annual awards programs. Students receive recognition during the event for honor roll, perfect attendance, good citizenship, leadership, regional and state winners, and academic achievement. Parents, teachers, administrators, council members, and tribal officials recognize the importance of honoring academic achievement during this ceremony. All awards given to students will be documented by the school counselor in the Native American Student Information System and be available to parents/guardians for review. A school may give other awards according to its own established criteria.

Honor Roll

Choctaw Central High School – An Honor Roll will be published one week after report cards are issued following each nine-week term. To be on the Chief's List, a student shall have all A's for all classes in which they are actively enrolled. To be on the Principal's List, a student shall have all A's or B's for all classes in which they are actively enrolled.

Choctaw Central Middle School and all Elementary Schools – An Honor Roll will be published one week after report cards are issued following each nine-week term. To be on the Chief's List, a student shall have all A's in the core academic areas – English/Language Arts (including Reading and/or Writing if a separate grade is given), Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. To be on the Principal's List, a student shall have all A's or B's in the core academic areas – English/Language Arts (including Reading and/or Writing if a separate grade is given), Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies.

Subject Area Awards

An awards day will be held at each school to recognize the student with the highest academic average for each subject. In case of a tie, each student will receive an award.

Perfect Attendance Award

To be eligible for Perfect Attendance, a student must be in school each and every day with no tardiness, no late check-ins and no early check-outs. Perfect attendance awards for the end of the year awards banquet will be based only on the first three nine weeks.

Attendance Excellence Award

To be eligible for the Attendance Excellence Award, a student must have no more than three (3) days excused absences (counting all check-in and check-out minutes) with no more than five (5) tardy marks. Students are not eligible for the attendance excellence award if they have any unexcused absences. Attendance Excellence Awards will be based only on the first three nine weeks.

Physical Education

In grades K-8, each student will receive Physical Education (P.E.) instruction that is based on the P.E. curriculum of the Mississippi Department of Education. Every student will receive a minimum of thirty (30) minutes of planned/structured physical education from a certified P.E. teacher every week of the school year. Grades in P.E. are to be based only on participation and effort by the student, not on the physical ability or lack of ability of the student. P.E. grades may not be based on participation in the National Physical Fitness Challenge, although all students are encouraged to participate. Because P.E. is designed as a developmental program for wellness, P.E. grades should not disqualify an elementary student from the honor roll.

Promotion/Retention Policy

Grades K-8

A student in grades K-8 will be promoted based upon mastery of standards and objectives for each course for his/her grade level.

Successful completion of a course shall be based on the student having a final grade of 65 or higher. Materials presented and assessed must be inclusive of all state standards and objectives for the specific course. To be promoted, a student in grades K-2 must achieve a passing grade in language arts and math. For students K-2, science and social studies standards will be integrated into language arts and math. A student in grades 3-8 must achieve a passing grade in Math, English/Language Arts (including Reading and/or Writing if a separate grade is given), Science, and Social Studies. Students will be retained if they do not meet these requirements.

Social promotion is strongly discouraged and is appropriate only in extraordinary circumstances. Parents/guardians and school personnel must work together including RTI support, to identify remedies or alternative educational opportunities for students being considered for social promotion, including extended learning opportunities, catchup programs, after school tutoring, GED, Job Corps, or similar programs.

Before a student can be socially promoted, a Multidisciplinary Team, or IEP Committee must meet and make a recommendation. The decision to promote or to retain a student with a disability will be made on an individual basis determined by the student's IEP Committee. The IEP Committee will be made up of the required members, including the student's parent/guardian. All social promotions must be approved or disapproved by the Director of Schools.

Choctaw Central High School

Promotion of high school students will be based solely upon the acquisition of Carnegie units. Successful completion of a course shall be based on the student having a final grade of 65 or higher. Choctaw Tribal School System prohibits the retention of students for extra-curricular purposes.

Classification of high school students will be determined using the following standards:

The number of credits earned at the end of each school year determines the grade classification for the next school year. Grade level classifications are not adjusted in the middle of a school year. Any Junior, who meets all graduation requirements, will be allowed to participate in graduation ceremonies.

The following high school classification is used:

Freshman – student enrolled in high school with successful completion of the eighth grade

Sophomore – student having a minimum of 6 high school credits

Junior – student having a minimum of 12 high school credits

Senior – student having a minimum of 18 high school credits

Academic Probation and Attendance Waivers

Students who are sixteen (16) years of age or over at Choctaw Central High School will be required to pass at least three (3) core academic credits per year, (math, English, science, social studies), or be placed on academic probation. During the academic probation, students will be required to attend school tutoring. Students and Parents/Guardians with a student on academic probation **will be required** to meet with the school Teacher Support Team (TST) to discuss interventions. Eighteen-year-old students or older, who are not progressing or continue to have excessive behavior referrals, who have not taken advantage of academic supports, may be dropped from school rosters only after written notification of the fact and will be encouraged to attend adult educational opportunities. Waivers for early entry to begin adult education (while still 18 or not dropped out of school for 6 months or more) must be requested by setting up a meeting with the Director of Schools.

Graduation Requirements for Choctaw Central High School

In order to graduate with their senior class, a senior student (or eligible Junior) must complete all graduation requirements by the end of the senior class official last day of classes. Teachers are not authorized to recalculate previous nine weeks' grades to help a senior improve their grades or achieve a passing grade (see Grading Policy).

Students at Choctaw Central High School are required to follow the graduation course requirements of the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) and obtain a minimum of 24 high school units in order to graduate. CCHS/MDE course requirements are available from the CCHS counselors' offices. Any student receiving a diploma from Choctaw Central must have earned at least two of the last four Carnegie units from Choctaw Central High School. **Students and parents/guardians are encouraged to visit with administrators and counselors to understand what is required.**

Students may apply toward graduation requirements credit earned through online courses approved through the MDE Mississippi Online Course Application. Enrollment in online courses must be approved by the high school principal in order for the course to be applied toward graduation requirements. Approval of the online courses will be based on current availability of courses and upon the specific needs of the students requesting the approval. **Students must receive prior approval from the high school principal before enrolling in any online course.** (See Technology Enhanced Instruction).

Traditional Diploma

Earn 24 credits (Carnegie Units) in a selection of required classes including English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Technology, Health, Fine Arts, Physical Education, and electives. Choctaw Central High School requires a senior-level Choctaw History course for graduation. Local school districts may add graduation requirements to the state requirements.

Traditional Diploma + Career and Technical Education (CTE) Endorsement

Earn 26 credits

Earn four credits from the same CTE program

Achieve at least an overall 2.5 grade point average

Score at Silver level on ACT WorkKeys

Successfully complete a dual credit course, a work-based learning experience or earn a national credential

Traditional Diploma + Academic Endorsement

Earn 26 credits

Successfully complete one of the following:

Score at least 17 on ACT English section and at least 19 on ACT Math section

Essentials of College Math course

Achieve at least an overall 2.5 grade point average

Successfully complete one Advanced Placement course and AP exam, one International Baccalaureate course and exam, or one dual credit course

Earn at least a C in the advanced course

Traditional Diploma + Distinguished Academic Endorsement

Earn 28 credits

Score at least 18 on ACT English section

Score at least 22 on ACT Math section

Achieve at least an overall 3.0 grade point average

Successfully complete one Advanced Placement course and AP exam, one International Baccalaureate course and exam, or one dual credit course

Earn at least a B in the advanced course

Special Education Certificate of Attendance

Those students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities or students with disabilities whose chosen graduation option is Certificate will be eligible for the Special Education Certificate of Attendance when they have completed the appropriate special education programming or reached the age of 20 at the beginning of their senior year. These students will participate in all senior activities including the graduation ceremony when they meet the expectations listed under graduation ceremony requirements.

Choctaw Collegiate Academy

CCHS and community college-eligible students, as determined by the principal, are encouraged to consider enrollment at East Central Community College (ECCC) full-time or through dual credit classes during their junior/senior year at CCHS in order to earn college credit. Students will have the option to enroll as an in-person student or a part-time student. Students will have options to take dual credit courses at CCHS, online with ECCC or full-time at ECCC.

Students pursuing this option must meet ALL criteria for CCHS and ECCC in order to participate in this program. Students who enroll into the Early College Program as a junior, will have the opportunity to graduate with an associate's degree at the time of high school graduation. This credit is transferable to the student's college of choice upon high school graduation. Contact the CCHS Guidance Office for eligibility requirements and the Tribal Scholarship Program at 601-650-7410 for funding information.

Dual Enrollment – CCHS and Community College

Eligible students, as determined by the principal, interested in enrollment at one of the area community colleges other than ECCC during their junior/senior year at CCHS in order to earn college credit, which is transferable to the student's college of choice upon high school graduation should contact the CCHS Guidance Office for eligibility requirements and the Tribal Scholarship Program at 601-650-7410 for funding information.

Graduation Ceremony Requirements

Participation in the graduation ceremony is a privilege; it is earned, not automatic. No student can miss more than 16 unexcused days of the 180-day school year to participate in graduation. Seniors must attend graduation practice in order to participate in graduation ceremonies, unless a special circumstance is approved by the Principal and the Director of Schools. Students may appeal to the principal, which must be upheld by the Director of Schools for participation in the graduation ceremony if they do not meet the requirements outlined above. The purpose of this requirement is to help our students develop positive behaviors before they leave Choctaw Central High School and enter the real world. A Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) may be utilized when a student surpasses or approaches 16 unexcused absences.

Valedictorian/Salutatorian Requirements

Valedictorian and Salutatorian are determined according to the procedure presented below. The CCHS Counselor and Principal will work together to initially calculate these awards. Their calculations will be reviewed by a committee consisting of the CCHS Principal, Counselor, one Assistant Principal, and the teacher who serves as senior class sponsor. No announcement of Valedictorian/Salutatorian will be made until this committee has carefully reviewed the accuracy of calculations. When the third nine weeks term ends, seniors will be notified of their rank in the class.

Valedictorian - The valedictorian of the graduating class is the student with the highest academic average, according to the Quality Point Distribution outlined below, for the entire four years of high school work. The student must have completed all four years of his/her high school program at Choctaw Central High School.

Salutatorian - The Salutatorian of the graduating class is the student with the second highest academic average for the entire four years of high school work. The student must have completed all four years of his/her high school program at Choctaw Central High School.

In selecting the Valedictorian and Salutatorian, the second semester average of the senior year shall be determined by using the third nine weeks grades.

Quality Point Distribution

Valedictorian, Salutatorian, honor graduates, and class rank will be determined by the following quality point system:

Regular Courses		E-1 Courses		E-2 Courses	
<u>Grade</u>	<u>Quality Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Quality Points</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Quality Points</u>
A	4	A	5	A	6
B	3	B	4	B	5
C	2	C	3	C	4
D	1	D	2	D	3
F	0	F	0	F	0

Regular courses include all courses not included in E-2 or E-1. Half-unit courses get half the quality points.

E-1 courses include Accelerated English, Chemistry, Algebra II, Algebra III, foreign language, Human Anatomy and Physiology, and Essentials for College Math.

E-2 Courses include Advanced Placement courses, Physics, Calculus, and Dual-Credit courses.

University Admission Standards

To be competitive for admission to a four-year college or university, students must be able to demonstrate that they exceeded the minimum requirements for graduation from high school. To be accepted for enrollment, students should check with their counselor for information specific to the college or university of their choice. Contact counselors and administrators for information about the requirements published by the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning.

College and Career Preparation

Deadlines to take the ACT, complete college admission requirements, and apply for scholarships are an important part of college and career preparation. The school will share information and deadlines with students through bulletin board postings, reminder notifications, email blasts, and postings on parent and student portals. Call your local school counselor if you have any questions or need assistance applying. Every school will have appropriate and grade-level specific college and career preparation activities each nine weeks term for Kindergarten through 12th grade. These activities and information will be provided by the counselor's office.

D. COMMUNICATION

School Telephones

Telephones are for business use only. Students will only be permitted to make or receive personal telephone calls in the event of an emergency. A student must get permission from school personnel in charge to use the telephone. Phones should not be used inside the classroom during the instructional day.

Electronic Communication

School related communication will be sent to parents/guardians and students through school-based programs (e.g. NASIS messenger, NASIS portal, email, School Status, social media posts), to keep each family current on grades, attendance, emergency information, etc. These messages will be sent by call out, text and/or email based on information provided on the student enrollment application. Please keep all phone numbers and information current so you will receive these important messages when they are sent out. If you do not want to receive this communication, you must opt out by contacting your local school NASIS administrator to update your preferences. Student-specific information regarding grades, attendance, etc. will be communicated only to the parent or legal guardian of each student.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

The Choctaw Tribal Schools encourage teachers and parents to meet regularly (whether in person or digitally) and to take a genuine interest in students attending Choctaw schools. Individual schools, teachers, and counselors will schedule times for parents to visit the school to discuss their child's progress and development and to become aware of activities in which their child participates. Parents will be invited to participate in discussions regarding their child's performance in school and are urged to be involved in all Response to Intervention (RTI)/Teacher Support Team (TST) and IEP meetings related to their child. Principals, counselors, and teachers will arrange time to visit families and to participate in community activities.

Parents are urged to confer with teachers concerning their children; however, since interruption of classes interferes with the learning process for other students, it is requested that parents first contact the principal's office to arrange an appointment with the teacher. All visitors must check in at the office and wear a visitor's pass. Teachers shall refer parents to the office if an appointment has not been made for a conference.

Professional Conduct of Staff in Communications

Because school staff must grade student work, evaluate students, or provide feedback in ways that friends do not, **employees may not "friend" a student on social media.** (Exceptions to this would include staff members who are relatives of a student. Even in this case, caution should be used in what is shown and discussed on social media sites). **Staff should never communicate with students through personal texting, personal email or personal social media.** Staff may communicate with students and families through the school monitored email systems and learning platforms. Parents are encouraged to utilize the student information parent portal or email to communicate with teachers. Staff members are permitted to text parent/guardians using personal cell phones during non-instructional time. **Staff text messaging a student on a personal phone is not a school approved use of media. In this same regard, students have a responsibility to not attempt to contact or "friend" employees through social media.**

Parent and Student Portal

The student information system has a portal where parent/guardians and/or students may view attendance, grades, and other important school related information. Policies regarding use of the portal are listed below:

1. The parent/guardian's user name and password only allow access to their child's information.
2. Parent/guardians are required to reset their password as soon as they receive their login information and all users are to keep their password secure at all times.
3. Information accuracy is a shared responsibility among the school, parents/guardians, and students. Please keep your information current. You can request information updates through the Portal.
4. The Choctaw Tribal School System maintains the right to add, modify, or delete information and Portal functions at any time, as well as the right to deny access to the portal with suitable cause.
5. Questions, concerns, or errors in data should be sent in writing to the classroom teacher or the local school NASIS Administrator.
6. Parents/guardians will receive a response to their concern within ten (10) school days. If your account gets locked, send your request in writing to the local school NASIS Administrator.
7. Due to confidentiality issues, WE CAN NOT UNLOCK YOUR ACCOUNT OVER THE PHONE.
8. The Portal is subject to electronic monitoring by the Choctaw Tribal School System.

For more information on this resource, contact your school counselor.

E. BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

One of the characteristics of an effective school is a safe, orderly climate conducive to teaching and learning. As children grow older, they are expected to assume more responsibility for their own actions

and to exercise self-discipline as part of becoming mature, thinking individuals. Teachers and all school staff are expected to assist in this process and make corrections when necessary.

Student / Staff Responsibilities

Students and staff members share the responsibility for creating and supporting a positive school climate. The degree to which students accept their responsibility to demonstrate the type of behavior that promotes a learning climate has a definite effect on their academic achievement.

The general rules of conduct are:

1. Be in class on time.
2. Be prepared for each class.
3. Be respectful of the rights and property of others and of the school.
4. Be safe.
5. Be responsible.
6. Maintain good manners.
7. Immediately report any unsafe condition to a teacher or staff member.

Parent / Guardian Responsibilities

The assistance of parents is needed in the following ways:

1. Review discipline policies with your children to make sure they understand them.
2. Know where your children are, what they are doing, and with whom they are associating.
3. Expect your children to be in the appropriate place at the correct time and behave in a proper manner.
4. Support action by school, security, police, and court officials who are working to create and maintain a safe learning environment for your children.

Senior Privileges

Students who are scheduled to graduate may earn Senior privileges. Privileges are granted for good attendance, good grades, and good behaviors. Privileges may include early release, senior activities, work study, and various other announced privileges. Prior to receiving privileges, a senior's parent/guardian must appear at school to sign a permission slip. Seniors who meet the guidelines will be granted these privileges. The principal must revoke privileges when a senior violates one or more of the guidelines listed below:

1. Student must be on schedule with earning Carnegie Units.
2. Student must have taken ALL required end of course assessments.
3. Student may not have more than five (5) absences per class per semester; unless there is an extended illness that is documented with medical documentation.
4. Students must have an ACT score on record.
5. Extenuating circumstances will be considered by the school principal.

Positive Behavior Support

Each school will post their recognition of students for positive behavior and academic achievements.

School Property

All school property should be treated with respect. Should anything be damaged, the student will be expected to make adequate repair, pay for the damaged item, or work off the cost of the item(s) during non- instructional time. In addition, appropriate disciplinary action may be taken if it is determined by school officials that the damage was done intentionally. Since maintenance problems related to gum chewing often occur, gum chewing will be restricted in the school.

Corridor / Hall Rules

Hallways may be crowded, thus creating a congested traffic problem. However, if students follow the simple rules dictated by courtesy and common sense, confusion will be kept to a minimum.

- Make a habit of walking on the right side.
- Do not run in the halls.

- Loud laughter, yelling, whistling or any other unnecessary noise is not permitted.
- If a teacher or visitor comes through the corridor when it is crowded, courteously move to one side.
- Do not block classroom doors or doors leading into the building.
- Be considerate of classes that are being conducted.

No student should be in the hall at any time without a pass. Also, no high school student is to be in the middle school building at any time, nor middle school student in the high school without permission from the office.

Cafeteria Rules

The cafeteria, besides being a place where the nutritional needs of students are met, provides an atmosphere where good human relations can be developed between students and staff and good manners can be reinforced. Students must adhere to the following guidelines:

- All students and school instructional staff are expected to eat in the school cafeteria every day.
- Students and staff shall clear tables of all waste and put waste into proper containers.
- Tables shall be left clean and orderly and chairs left properly spaced at each table.
- All food items must be disposed of properly. **No food may be taken from the cafeteria, unless the cafeteria is following an approved emergency plan that allows alternate food service schedules and locations.**
- Students are not permitted to bring any drink items into the cafeteria.
- Although students are welcome to bring their lunches from home, packaged restaurant food items may not be brought into the cafeteria and food may not be delivered to students at the school.
- Students must not break in the lunch line or hold places in line for other students.
- The cafeteria will close at 7:50 a.m. for breakfast. Students arriving after 7:50 a.m. will not be served, except in the case of a late arriving bus.

CCHS Lunch Period Student Responsibilities

- Students must report to their 3rd period class for attendance to be recorded before going to the cafeteria.
- Students will leave the classroom with their teacher and walk as a group to the cafeteria with their teacher.
- Students will enter the cafeteria through designated doors.
- Students will sit together as a class at assigned tables in the cafeteria.
- Students will not bring outside beverages into the cafeteria. Outside beverages will be confiscated.
- Students will remain in the cafeteria until lunch period has concluded.
- Students are not allowed to take any food or beverages out of the cafeteria.
- Students will return to class as a group with their teacher.
- Students are not allowed to go to the restroom after lunch until they have first reported back to the classroom and obtained permission from the teacher.
- Students who do not comply with these guidelines will be subject to the Discipline Plan (Willful Disobedience).

CCHS Lunch Period Teacher Responsibilities

- Teachers must record class attendance before going to the cafeteria.
- Teachers who have classes assigned to second lunch will not release their classes until the second lunch bell has sounded.
- Teachers will escort their classes to and from the cafeteria as a class.
- Teachers will take their attendance books with them to the cafeteria to account for students in case of an emergency.
- Teachers will immediately report any student non-compliance to the administrator on duty.
- Teachers will not leave the cafeteria until all assigned students are present and accounted for.

Personal Appearance Policy

Choctaw Tribal Schools focus on the student and emphasizes student academic performance and respect. It is also the district's desire to promote school safety, improve discipline and enhance the overall appearance of the learning environment.

Personal Appearance

Students and parents are responsible for maintaining reasonable standards of cleanliness and appropriateness of dress. Students are encouraged to be well-groomed. Students whose dress or appearance is disruptive will be referred to the principal or assistant principal who, working with parents/guardians and the student, will have the responsibility for correcting the problem.

Prohibited Clothing Items

- No flip flops, sandals or slide shoes allowed
- No pierced body jewelry or decoration, except for ear rings
- No visible tattoos and scarification with profanity or inappropriate pictures.
- No students shall have their body parts painted with paint, liquid paper, ink, or other distracting marks
- No bandanas visible on campus at any time, except when used as a mask during mask mandates
- No hoods, caps, bandanas, or any head covering of any kind indoors (including classrooms, halls, and buses).
- No profane, inflammatory, vulgar, or morally suggestive language on clothing, including alcohol, tobacco slogans, or messages or graphics of illegal drugs
- No halter-tops allowed
- No see-through shirts/blouses
- No low-rise pants or other clothing that exposes the midriff or waist area
- No colors, bandanas, symbols, signs or dress associated with gangs or cults will be tolerated
- No blankets worn as jackets
- No sleepwear or underwear worn outside clothing

Clothing items allowed with Caution

- Skinny pants, leggings, tights, or yoga pants must have a top, dress, or skirt that covers the hips.
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses must extend at least to the end of the student's fingertips when the student is standing straight with arms down by the side.
- Tank-tops, muscle shirts can be worn but only with a t-shirt underneath.
- Costumes (with no masks) are allowed only on special approved activity days.

Required Clothing Items

- Closed toe shoes
- Clothing that does not disrupt the learning environment and promotes school safety
- Athletic shoes when participating in physical education

Violations of Personal Appearance Policy

Level 1: Students with up to three violations will receive a documented verbal warning. The student's parent/guardian will be notified through phone call or letter.

Level 2: A conference with the parent/guardian will be held.

Level 3: Student may be assigned to Step 2 of the Discipline Ladder

Travel Wear

All students traveling with athletic teams must comply with the Personal Appearance Policy or wear official travel uniforms designated by the team coach. Students must comply with policy requirements on school-sponsored field trips.

Spirit Day

Some days during the school year may be designated as a “Spirit Day.” On these days, school colors and school organizations will be promoted. Tops may include appropriate shirts that display logos promoting school organizations associated with the school. On game days, the principal may grant approval for team members and cheerleaders to wear athletic clothing during the school day.

Special Days

Principals may occasionally designate special days to allow a deviation from the dress code. These days will be announced and promoted prior to the event.

Attending Athletic Events

Students who are spectators at athletic events are subject to the same rules that are observed in school and owe the athletes every consideration and respect possible. Students should refrain from the use of abusive language and inconsiderate treatment to visiting athletes and officials. Any unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of the spectators may result in probation for the school.

F. DISCIPLINE PLAN

The Choctaw Tribal Schools recognize that they cannot, and should not, attempt to list every action which might result in disciplinary procedures. The listing of certain specific rules is not intended, therefore, to exclude other rules which are generally accepted as standards of conduct for citizens of this community.

Principals and Teachers will carefully adhere to all Due Process procedures and will investigate every incident to ensure that victims and innocent students are not punished / disciplined as if they were violators of school rules. It is unfair and unjust to dispense equal punishment for unequal offenses.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

In addition to the Choctaw Tribal Schools discipline policy, Choctaw Tribal Schools will also utilize Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to analyze student discipline data and implement processes and procedures that address issues concerning behavior. PBIS is a proactive approach to establishing the behavior supports and social culture needed for all students in a school to achieve social, emotional, and academic success.

There are different levels of PBIS:

- School-Wide – procedures and processes intended for all students in specific settings and across the campus
- Classroom – processes and procedures that reflect school-wide expectations for student behavior coupled with pre-planned strategies applied within the classroom
- Target Groups – processes and procedures designed to address behavioral issues of groups of students with similar behavior problems or behaviors that seem to occur for the same reason (Tier 2)
- Individual Student – processes and procedures reflect school-wide expectations for student behavior coupled with team-based strategies to address problematic behaviors of individual students (Tier 3)

Features of PBIS include:

- Creating a continuum of behavior supports from a systems perspective
- Utilizing effective, efficient, and relevant data-based decision-making systems
- Giving priority to academic success
- Clearly defined and communicated expectations and rules
- Consequences and clearly stated procedures for reinforcing appropriate behavior and for teaching appropriate replacement behaviors

- Implementing a Behavior Support Plan (BSP) to provide support for students with more challenging behaviors.
- Conducting a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and writing a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) for students who do not respond to school interventions or a Behavior Support Plan

All school staff will work with students in a mentoring fashion to help students plan for success at school. School and family working together is key to success concerning student behavioral expectations. When a student **chooses** to break the rules and is referred to the office, disciplinary action will be taken according to the discipline ladder shown below.

Individual Self-Discipline

Students, who have reached the age of young adults, should be expected to assume more responsibility for their own actions and should welcome the opportunities presented to exercise self-discipline as a natural part of becoming mature, thinking individuals. Teachers and all school staff are expected to assist in this process and make corrections when necessary.

Classroom teachers will handle the first level of behavioral concerns with a student which includes violations of the school or teacher's classroom rules that disrupt classroom operations, but are not disrespectful or disobedient to the teacher. The teacher's corrective action may include the following: counseling with the student, implementing a classroom behavior improvement plan, hosting a parent conference, referral to counselor or guidance office, restricting the student from classroom privileges such as recess or other non-instructional activities, assigning the student additional academic responsibilities such as homework or special projects, or any other actions which are determined appropriate by the teacher. When behavior is excessive or disrespectful to the staff and peers, the student will be referred to the school administrator.

The school administrator will determine the appropriate discipline step for the offense when a student is referred by the teacher to the office. This is a general guide and does not restrict the administrator from making other appropriate discipline decisions that are not listed on this ladder and not listed on the offenses list. Student behavior events will be logged into the student's Behavior tab within the school's NASIS database by a school administrator or his/her designee. These recorded behavior events may be used as documentation should the student be referred to the District Discipline Review Committee or if there is an appeal of a disciplinary decision. Due Process is ensured and documented at all steps.

Discipline Ladder

Step 1

- A. Student/principal conference
- B. Action which may include a written assignment related to the referral, corporal punishment, and/or conference involving student and/or teacher
- C. Parent contact (by phone or mail), and
- D. Probation: If there is no further referral to the office for five (5) school days, the student will be removed from the ladder. If student has a referral during probation, option to extend probation days or move student up to next step of discipline.
- E. When a student has a discipline infraction, the student MAY be pulled from elective courses, recess, activity or extracurricular periods to ensure he/she is provided any material or instruction the student has missed so he/she is not left behind academically.

Step 2

- A. Student/principal conference
- B. Up to one (1) day of in-school suspension (ISS), corporal punishment, or service-learning project
- C. Parent contact (by phone or personal visit)
- D. Behavior Support Plan (BSP) shall be put in place, and

- E. Probation: If there is no further referral to the office for ten (10) school days, the student will be removed from the ladder. If student has a referral during probation, option to extend probation days or move student up to next step of discipline.
- F. When a student has a discipline infraction, the student MAY be pulled from elective courses, recess, activity or extracurricular periods to ensure he/she is provided any material or instruction the student has missed so he/she is not left behind academically.

Step 3

- A. Student/principal conference
- B. Up to two (2) days of in-school suspension (ISS) or up to one (1) day of out-of-school suspension (OSS), or combination of ISS and OSS
- C. Parent contact (by phone or personal visit)
- D. Behavior Support Plan (BSP) shall be put in place or modified.
- E. A Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) may be requested. A Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be developed from the results of the FBA.
- F. If student receives OSS, a parent/student/principal conference is required at school before the student may return to the regular school program, and
- G. Probation: If there is no further referral to the office for fifteen (15) school days, the student will be removed from the ladder. If student has a referral during probation, option to extend probation days or move student up to next step of discipline.
- H. Whenever a student has a discipline infraction, the student MAY be pulled from elective courses, recess, activity or extracurricular periods to ensure he/she is provided any material or instruction the student has missed so he/she is not left behind academically.

Step 4

- A. Student/principal conference
- B. Up to three (3) days of out-of-school suspension
- C. Parent contact (by phone or personal visit)
- D. A Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) must be conducted to address behavior pattern.
- E. Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) shall be put in place or updated
- F. If student receives OSS, parent/student/principal conference required at school before student may return to regular school program, and
- G. Probation: If there is no further referral to the office for twenty (20) school days, the student will be removed from the ladder. If the student has a referral during probation, option to extend probation days or move student up to next step of discipline.
- H. Whenever a student has a discipline infraction, the student MAY be pulled from elective courses, recess, activity or extracurricular periods to ensure he/she is provided any material or instruction the student has missed so he/she is not left behind academically.

Step 5

- A. Student/principal conference
- B. Up to ten (10) days of out-of-school suspension or until a hearing with the Discipline Review Committee (DRC) is complete
- C. Referral to Discipline Review Committee to uphold the recommendation of the principal or make recommendation to the Director of Schools
- D. A Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) must be conducted.
- E. Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) shall be put in place or updated.
- F. Parent contact (by phone, personal visit with signature and/or certified mail),
- G. Student may not attend or participate in any school activity on any school campus (to include athletic events) pending the outcome of the DRC hearing, and
- H. Possible other restrictions may be required due to suspension, expulsion, or Alternative placement.

SUGGESTED steps for Behavior offenses:

Behavior	Step
Arson***	5
Assault, harassment, threatening, sexual assault or intimidation of other students	5
Assault, harassment, threatening or intimidation of another student or school personnel	5
Battery / Aggravated Assault ***	5
Blocking an entrance / exit to a building creating unsafe environment	5
Brandishing or threatening with an object which appears to be a weapon	5
Bullying / Including cyberbullying	5
Cell Phone / Electronic Device Violation	1, 2
Cheating	1, 2
Disorderly conduct***	4, 5
Display of Affection (PDA) to include passion marks (“hickeys”)	1, 2, 3
Disruptive Behavior / Willful Disobedience / Insubordination	1, 2, 3
Dress Code Violation	1, 2
Fighting	4, 5
Forgery or Pretense	1, 2
Gambling	2, 3, 4
Gang-related affiliation	4, 5
Inappropriate use, possession, sale or distribution of medication***	5
Internet Abuse	1, 2
Leaving campus without authorization	5
Making threats to a student, staff member or to the school, not limited to social media, via text, email or in writing	5
Possession of dangerous objects / weapons / explosives***	5
Possession of drug paraphernalia***	5
Profanity, vulgarity, or obscenity (including gestures & electronic)	1, 2, 3
Pulling a Fire Alarm / Discharging a Fire Extinguisher	4, 5
Repeated violation of school rules	4, 5
Sexual act or activity at any time on school grounds or at any school sponsored event	4, 5
Skipping Class	3
Stealing* and ***	5
Tardiness (excessive) Please refer to the tardy policy	Tardy Policy
Trespassing or Breaking and Entering***	5
Vandalism*	2, 3, 4, 5
Use, sale, distribution, or possession of tobacco (including, but not limited to, nicotine vape products)	4, 5
Use or attempted use of dangerous objects / weapons / explosives***	5
Use, sale, distribution, or possession of alcohol and drugs (including, but not limited to, THC products)***	5

Behavior chart symbols:

*Notes when restitution required and student assigned to clean vandalized area with parent approval.

***Notes events required to call Police.

Principal has discretion in assignment of steps, depending on the severity of the offense. When alternative education placement is recommended, the principal will make a recommendation for the placement days served by the student. The length of placement days will be determined through an administrative review process that considers various aspects of the behavior, including but not limited to, the nature of the offense, intent, participation level, and prior behavior. Student punishment may carry over to the next school year.

Parent Notification of Discipline

In the case of discipline referrals, the school will make every effort to contact parents to keep them informed of their child's behavior. **Parents must keep phone numbers current at the school in case they need to be contacted.**

Notification Expectations for each Discipline Step

Step 1: Principal, Assistant Principal, Social Worker, Home/School Liaison, or Counselor will contact parent by phone. If unable to reach immediately, school secretary or designated staff will be assigned to contact by phone and if unable to reach, will document in NASIS and then will mail referral. School staff will document all attempts to contact parents/guardians in NASIS or other district communication tool.

Step 2, Step 3, and Step 4: Principal, Assistant Principal or In-School Suspension staff will contact parent by telephone to notify of corporal punishment or placement in In-School Suspension (ISS) classroom. If unable to reach after three (3) attempts, staff will refer to Home School Liaison for personal visit to be made within 24 hours. The referring teacher is also encouraged to contact the parent. All attempts to reach parent/guardian will be documented in NASIS or other district communication tool.

Step 3 and Step 4: In the case of an out-of-school suspension, parents/guardians must be notified before the suspension begins. If required, permission to conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) will be obtained. All meetings and attempts to contact parent/guardian will be documented in NASIS or other district communication tool.

Step 4: The Home School Liaison or Secretary (as designated) will schedule a school conference requiring the parents to meet with the Principal or Assistant Principal before the student may return to school and give the date to the Principal or appropriate Secretary.

Step 5: Parent contact must be by phone or by certified mail. The Home School Liaison will attempt to hand deliver the letter as well. All attempts to contact parent/guardian will be documented in NASIS or other district communication tool.

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment, which is limited to the striking of a student on the buttocks with a paddle, may only be administered by the principal or assistant principal in the presence of one other witness **who must be a tribal member**. If a tribal member is the principal or assistant principal administering corporal punishment, another employee must be present to witness the punishment. The classroom teacher of the child being punished should not be the witness, nor may school staff other than the principal or assistant principal administer any physical force or aversive physical stimuli when correcting student behavior.

- Prior to administering corporal punishment, the principal or assistant principal must advise the student of the particular misconduct for which he or she is to be punished and give the student a chance to give his/her version of the facts.
- Corporal punishment, or the threat of corporal punishment, may not be used to stimulate academic achievement or to punish academic lapses.
- In instances where corporal punishment is refused, suspension or in-school suspension is a mandatory alternative discipline measure.
- In all cases where corporal punishment is administered, parent must be called. A discipline form must also be completed and mailed to the parent. Behavioral data will be maintained in the student information system.

An authorization form is included in the student enrollment application each year that parents/guardians must fill out indicating whether they do or do not wish for their child/children to receive corporal punishment.

In-School Suspension

In-school suspension class begins at 7:50 a.m. and ends at 3:15 p.m. A student must attend all day to receive credit as one day in-school suspension. In-school suspension (ISS) is a disciplinary action of removing a student from a scheduled class and placing him/her in a closely supervised environment in an effort to correct behavior. The ISS classroom will be monitored by an adult employed by the school system. The intent of ISS is to correct the behavior that led to their placement and help students successfully return to the regular classroom.

Students will receive assignments and guidance from the coordinator of ISS related to the academic work sent by teachers. The student will learn conflict resolution or decision-making skills to build opportunities for better behavior. **A behavior contract will be completed and submitted to the principal prior to returning to the regular classroom and a copy shared with the referring teacher.**

Classroom teachers are required to provide academic assignments to the coordinator for students placed in ISS. When work is not completed, days may be added until all work assigned by the teacher(s) is completed and returned to the classroom teacher(s). Upon returning to the regular classroom, students will be provided the opportunity from their teachers to make up any additional work missed due to their ISS placement. Completed work will be graded and used as part of the student's grades. Placement in ISS does not count as an absence, but the student must complete assigned work within three (3) days of returning to the classroom in order to receive a grade.

Students assigned to ISS do not enjoy school privileges, events, or assemblies during their placement and are not allowed to participate in any extracurricular activity that occurs during their placement.

Suspension (Out-of-School)

Out-of-school suspension (OSS) is defined as a denial of school attendance for a student. A student who is suspended from school is also suspended from participating in or attending all school related events or non-school events hosted on the school campus.

- Out-of-school suspension (OSS) can be assigned to students for one (1) to ten (10) days based on the severity of the offense in relation to the school or classroom rules.
- Suspension days are considered unexcused absences, and students receive a zero (0) grade for classroom assignments missed while the student was suspended.
- Students are subject to restrictions from all extra-curricular activities while on suspension from school. (See section on Attendance requirements.)
- Parents will be contacted about the suspension and required conferences will be set up before the student returns to school.
- Due process procedures will be followed in all cases regarding suspension from school.

Expulsion

For any offense other than the possession of a weapon or explosive device, expulsion is defined as any denial of school attendance which will terminate at the beginning of the next school year.

- Expulsion which results from the possession of a firearm or explosive device shall be for one calendar year.
- A student may appeal an expulsion through the following levels: (1) the Director of Schools, (2) the Tribal Chief.
- A student who is expelled will be encouraged to pursue alternative forms of education. A student who is expelled shall not be allowed on campus at any time during his/her expulsion and shall not be allowed to attend any school-related activities. This will apply to all schools in the Choctaw Tribal School System.
- Any student who has faced an expulsion or suspension in another school district must complete the expulsion and/or suspension before they will be allowed to enter the Choctaw Tribal School System.

Detention

Students may receive Early Morning Detention or After School Detention as determined by the principal with the guidelines being explained to the parent/guardian. Students who fail to report to detention are subject to suspension.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty will be defined as receiving or giving aid on any exam, written assignment, quiz, recitation, or project. Plagiarism, or the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own, is a form of academic dishonesty. Artificial Intelligence (AI), in some forms, may be considered plagiarism; therefore, AI should only be used for assignments when approved by the teacher and for the purposes intended per lesson outlines/rubrics and never on assessments.

Participation in academic dishonesty will result in the following:

1. An automatic zero (0) for that particular exam, written assignment, quiz, recitation or project
2. For a second occurrence, an automatic loss of academic or extra-curricular privileges as deemed necessary by the Principal and a required conference with the parent/guardian, student, teacher, and an administrator before credit for the course will be given.
3. Students may not appeal the Principal's decision regarding academic dishonesty beyond the Director of Schools.

Weapons, Drugs, Illegal Substances, Alcohol, Tobacco or Vaping Products

The Choctaw Police Department shall be called immediately when a student is found in possession of ANY illegal substance. The school will contact the parent, begin discipline procedures, and file appropriate charges with the court system.

Employees are responsible for reporting to the school principal any student who is in possession of an illegal substance – including possession of prescription or non-prescription drugs – for immediate discipline according to the school policy. **For everyone's safety, unknown substances should not be handled by anyone at the school.** In addition, the school must immediately call the Choctaw Police Department and request that police come to the school campus. All illegal substances will be turned over to police, and charges will be filed by the school staff, as appropriate. The employee will give a written or verbal statement to law enforcement about the incident.

Guns

Choctaw Tribal Schools fully support the enforcement of the Gun-Free Schools Act, Title VIII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Any student who is in possession of any type of firearm or air/gas powered gun (pellet, BB, etc.), operable or inoperable, while in school, on school property, on the school bus, on the way to or from school, at any school function or activity, or has such object in a vehicle on school property, shall immediately be suspended from school for up to ten (10) days and recommended to the Discipline Review Committee for expulsion for no less than one (1) calendar year from all programs of the Choctaw Tribal Schools.

Students who possess other types of "guns" (stopper guns, cap guns, water guns, and other toy guns) shall be suspended from school for up to ten (10) days. A second offense shall constitute up to ten (10) days suspension with a recommendation to the Discipline Review Committee for expulsion. Students who possess and use such "guns" to threaten, intimidate, and/or otherwise disrupt the school environment shall be immediately suspended and recommended for expulsion.

Guns in student possession will be seized and turned over to the Choctaw Police Department.

Other Weapons or Explosives – Possession of

Possession, by a student, of any hard or sharp object, such as a knife, brass knuckles, etc., that may be considered a weapon or a taser device or any explosive or potentially explosive devices while at school, on school property, on the school bus, on the way to or from school or any school function or activity, regardless of the object's original purpose, shall be considered in violation of this policy.

Students who possess these objects will be immediately suspended from school for up to ten (10) days and recommended to the Discipline Review Committee for expulsion for a period of up to one (1) calendar year.

Other Weapons – Use of

Any object used as a weapon by a student shall be seized and after due investigation and due process shall be turned over to the Choctaw Police Department, if determined appropriate. Principals shall use their own discretion in each instance, not involving a gun, concerning the necessity of notifying Choctaw Police Department.

Drug, Illegal Substance, Alcohol, Tobacco Policy

The health and safety risks of tobacco use, alcohol use, and illicit drug use are well documented. The possession of illicit drugs is illegal. In addition, the possession, use, and distribution of alcohol and tobacco to citizens under the age of 21 are illegal. The use/abuse, possession, or distribution of these substances is strictly prohibited at school, on school property, or while attending any school activity.

The following disciplinary actions will be consistently imposed:

- A. Any individual found to possess, distribute, or be under the influence of alcohol, alcoholic beverages, inhalants, any controlled substance (including but not limited to marijuana, any narcotic drug, any hallucinogen, any stimulant, depressant, “look alike,” prescription drugs, or counterfeit substance, represented or believed to be any of the aforementioned substances) shall be disciplined according to step 5 of the school discipline ladder which includes:
 1. Up to ten (10) days out-of-school suspension and,
 2. Recommendation of alternative placement or expulsion to the Discipline Review Committee. In addition, the school must immediately call the Choctaw Police Department and request that police come to the school campus. All illegal substances will be turned over to police, and charges will be filed as appropriate.
- B. Any student found to possess, distribute or use tobacco or vaping, in any form, shall be disciplined according to step 3 or higher of the school discipline ladder. Subsequent violations shall be dealt with at the appropriate higher step to include referral to the Discipline Review Committee.
- C. If a student is expelled, it is recommended that the student begin home schooling (see Home Schooling policy).

Misuse of Electronic Devices

The act of recording/videoing any events on campus without permission, especially a fight between other students, is not permitted. If a student is caught recording with their cell phone or electronic device, the following disciplinary procedures will be followed:

- The phone will be confiscated and held until requested by the parent/guardian and a fee is paid.
- In certain instances, the cell phone will not be returned so that video/photos may be retained and provided to the appropriate law enforcement agency.
- The person responsible for recording the event will be suspended out-of-school for three (3) days.
- In addition, anyone who is caught forwarding the video to other students/persons will be suspended for an additional three (3) days.
- Finally, any student who posts a video on any social networking page concerning the event on the internet, may be suspended pending a hearing, and recommended for no less than 45 days in alternative school, or expelled the remainder of the school year.

Discipline Review Committee Guidelines

Discipline Review Committee shall be used as a due process hearing committee in several instances to include the following:

1. Recommendations of expulsion or suspension (in excess of ten (10) days) by building principal.
2. Recommendations by a building principal for alternative placement for disciplinary, educational, or safety reasons. The alternative placement shall include Alternative Education Center, GED

program, another school within the Department of Schools, or other placement available to the Department of Schools.

3. Other reasons as outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook.
4. Other reason deemed advisable by a building principal.
5. Appeal of a short-term suspension of five (5) to ten (10) days. Appeals of less than five (5) days may be appealed only to the building principal.

Composition of Discipline Review Committee

1. A presiding officer, appointed by the Director of Schools, who ensures that the rules of the proceeding are communicated and adhered to by all parties. It is also the duty of the presiding officer to have the minutes of the hearing transcribed in an accurate manner and to forward the recommendation of the committee to the parents and Director of Schools. The presiding officer is not a member of the committee. The presiding officer may be assisted by a recording secretary or court reporter.
2. There shall be three (3) committee members on the Discipline Review Committee. Members are preferably school administrators, but may include other school employees (to ensure tribal representation on the committee) who are familiar with school policy, rules, and due process.

Members shall not work on the same campus as the student or recommending principal and shall not be a relative or close family friend of anyone involved.

Purpose of Discipline Review Committee

1. To ensure fair and impartial disciplinary action within the Department of Schools
2. To review all evidence presented (both written and oral testimony) and make recommendations to the Director of Schools based on the evidence presented
3. To ensure due process safeguards have been and are maintained
4. To ensure that school rules are fairly applied
5. To make a recommendation to the Director of Schools that upholds, rejects, or modifies the principal's recommendation

Procedural Guidelines

The constitutional rights of individuals require the student be given due process; therefore, adherence to a system of constitutionally and legally sound procedures is essential. The presiding officer shall ensure the following:

1. Written notice of charges against a student or reason for the review shall be supplied to the student and parent.
2. The parent or guardian shall be present at the hearing.
3. Parents are informed they may be represented by legal counsel at their own expense.
4. Hearings shall be closed to the public to protect the student.
5. The student shall be given an opportunity to give his/her version of facts and their implications. He/she shall be allowed to offer the testimony of other witnesses and other evidence, if relevant.
6. The student shall be allowed to observe all evidence offered against him.
7. The hearing shall be conducted in an impartial manner, and the committee's determination shall be based solely upon the evidence presented at the hearing.
8. A record shall be kept of the hearing and retained by the Director of Schools in a secure location.
9. Within three (3) business days after the hearing, the committee shall make its decision as to disciplinary action.
10. The findings shall be documented in writing and hand delivered to the parent/guardian who acknowledges receipt, and a copy will be given to the Director of Schools. When unable to hand deliver the notice, the notification should be sent by certified mail.
11. The student and his parent shall be made aware, by the presiding officer, of their right to appeal the decision to the Director of Schools and ultimately, to the Tribal Chief.
12. Appeals from parents/guardians must be submitted within five (5) business days of the parent receiving the notification of the decision.

13. If an appeal is submitted, the Director of Schools or Tribal Chief will act within five (5) business days as to whether the appeal is approved or denied and only based upon the record from the hearing.
14. If a student is found not guilty of charges, the student has the right to have an allegation of misconduct and related information expunged from the student's school record.

Definitions Related to Discipline

Alcohol possession - Students responsible in any way for alcoholic beverages of any description being on a person, in a school building; on a school bus; on school property; at any off-campus activity sponsored by the school - to, from, and/or at; adjacent to school property.

Arson - The criminal act of deliberately setting fire or attempting to set fire to property.

Assault - Any attempt with force and violence to do bodily injury to another; includes threatening, bullying, and other forms of intimidation. Includes physical, sexual, or verbal.

Attendance Violation - Not attending school or classes as required in student schedule.

Battery - Touching or striking another person against his or her will or intentionally causing bodily harm to another (e.g. Simple Assault).

Behavior Support Plan (BSP) - An agreement between the student and school outlining what behavior is expected and what the student, school, teachers, administrators, and other entities will contribute to support the student's appropriate behavior. A behavior support plan should contain rewards for appropriate behavior and consequences for not following rules and procedures. The plan is developed by a committee comprising teachers, counselors, behavior intervention staff, school support staff, parents, and the student through the Teacher Support Team (TST).

Bullying - To seek to harm, intimidate, humiliate, or coerce another person. Repeated negative behaviors (verbal, written or physical) intended to frighten or cause discomfort.

Burglary - Unlawful entry or attempted entry into a building with the intent to commit a crime.

Cheating - Any act of giving or receiving information on tests and exams.

Cyberbullying - Bullying that takes place over digital devices such as cell phones, computers, and tablets. It can occur through SMS, text, and apps, or on-line in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, hosting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. It can include sharing personal or private information about someone else causing embarrassment or humiliation.

Disobedience - The failure to act upon or to follow reasonable instructions given by the person in charge, including any violation of written school rules.

Disorderly conduct - Unruly behavior that "disturbs the peace" of the school setting or substantially disrupts the orderly learning environment, often requiring school administration to contact public safety officers. Includes, but not limited to the following: possession of illegal substance in which classes were interrupted to search and make the school environment safe, pulling fire alarms without permission

Display of affection - Kissing any part of another person's body, sitting on another's lap, embracing/ hugging/holding any part of another person's body, licking any part of another person's body, pinching/ grabbing/squeezing any part of another person's body, passion marks / "hickeys."

Disruptive behavior - Any act, physical or vocal, which makes it difficult to continue normal activities.

Distribution of illegal substance - Giving away or selling alcoholic beverages, cigarettes or vaping devices, marijuana, or prescription or over the counter medication, or distributing any other illegal substance that the person is not authorized to distribute.

Drug paraphernalia - Any equipment, product, or accessory that is modified for making, using, or concealing drugs, typically for recreational purposes.

Drug possession - Students responsible in any way for having controlled or narcotic substances of any description being on a person, in a school building; on a school bus; on school property; at any off-campus activity sponsored by the school - to, from, and/or at; adjacent to school property.

Drug/Alcohol use - Students under the influence of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs at any place under the jurisdiction of the school.

Electronic device violation - Use of a cell phone or other device during unauthorized times or locations; misuse of a device in any way.

Fighting - Two or more individuals mutually participating in a violent struggle involving the exchange of physical blows and/or the use of weapons. (e.g. Aggravated Assault).

Forgery - To falsify a document with the intent to deceive, usually by signing someone's name to a document pretending to be the person.

Functional Behavior Assessment/Behavior Intervention Plan (FBA/BIP) - Parental consent is required to conduct a Functional Behavior Assessment. A behavior intervention plan (BIP) is a written improvement plan created for a student based on the outcome of the functional behavior assessment (FBA). The FBA should identify what is maintaining or causing a challenging behavior, and the BIP specifies the actions to take to improve or replace the behavior.

Gambling – The act of playing a game of chance for stakes, e.g. money or possessions. Includes but not limited to, throwing dice, cards, online betting, etc.

Gang - An organized group of criminals; often they have adopted colors, signs, or creeds they are expected to use, wear, and obey.

Harassment - Misconduct which involves verbal, physical contact, or written words that are unwelcome, intimidating, offensive, annoying, threatening, or puts a person in fear of their safety or repeatedly annoying someone which creates an intimidating or hostile environment.

Hazing - Committing an act against a student or coercing a student to commit an act that creates risk of harm to a person in order to initiate into a student organization, club, group, or class.

Insubordination - Unwillingness to submit to authority, refusal to respond to a reasonable request; being disobedient.

Internet Abuse - Any use of the internet that is prohibited under acceptable use policies.

Intimidation - Physical, verbal, written, or electronic action which creates fear of harm, without a weapon and without actual physical attack.

Kidnapping - Unlawful seizure, transportation, and/or detention of a person against his/her will (e.g. abduction, hostage taking).

Medication – A drug prescribed by a doctor used to diagnose, cure, treat, or prevent disease, prescribed to a specific individual; also a non-prescribed substance used in the same way.

Obscenity - An act or expression which is offensive to the prevailing concepts of morality or decency of the school community, including sexually explicit or vulgar; stressing or suggesting indecency, lust or depravity; offensive to the senses whether language, actions, writing, oral, physical, or electronic.

Physical altercation - A physical altercation is generally a confrontation, tussle, or physical aggression that does not result in injury.

Pretense - An act of telling a falsehood with the intent to deceive.

Profanity - The irreverent use of a sacred name or the use of words considered lewd or coarse, swearing, cursing, or other vile words showing contempt.

Robbery - Taking of, or attempting to take, anything of value from someone either by force, threat of force, and/or by putting the victim in fear.

Sale of illegal substance - Selling alcoholic beverages, cigarettes or vaping devices, marijuana, prescription or over the counter medication, or selling any other substance that is made to look like such substances, that the person is not authorized to sell.

Sexual act or activity/offense - Physical contact between two people beyond normal interaction meant to entice lust, foreplay with or without force, threat of force; including intercourse and rape.

Sexual harassment - Misconduct of a sexual nature, which involves verbal or physical contact that is unwelcome, intimidating or offensive. This includes, but not limited to, unwelcome touching, verbal comments, or requests for sexual favors.

Stealing - Any act of removing public or private property without the consent of the owner.

Suicide/Attempted - Attempting to take one's life voluntarily and intentionally; threat or mention of attempting this act.

Suspicion of use - Exhibiting behaviors that suggests than an individual consumed a substance that is illegal for them to use.

Tardiness - Arriving late for school and/or to scheduled class or lunch periods.

Theft - Taking property of another person without threat, violence or bodily harm; including electronic data.

Threat - Any verbal, written, or electronic message in which a person intends to cause harm to students, staff, or school facilities.

Tobacco Use/Possession - Students responsible in any way for tobacco of any description being on a person; in a school building; on a school bus; on school property; at any off-campus activity sponsored by the school whether plan is to sell, distribute, hold for someone, or use.

Trespassing - To be on school property after regular school hours without approval or in unauthorized locations (before, during, or after school) without approval.

Truancy - An act of being absent from school or class without permission in excess of the days allowed (includes tardiness).

Vandalism - Any act of destroying, altering, defacing, or otherwise damaging public or private property.

Vaping - The action or practice of inhaling and exhaling the vapor produced by an electronic cigarette or similar device.

Violation of policy - An incident or behavior in which established rules and expectations of the system were not followed.

Violence - Any act of bullying, threatening, intimidation, or physical harm.

Vulgarity - The use of words or actions which are offensive to anyone present to tend to defame the character of another person; obscene words or actions.

Weapons possession - Possessing any instrument capable of causing bodily harm.

Weapons possession with threat to use - Any overt display of and/or threat to use any instrument capable of causing bodily harm.

G. PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Personal belongings permitted by teachers and parents may be brought to school as long as they do not become disruptive and are not used for purposes other than those permitted by the teacher. Any items of personal belonging which are not approved by the teacher will be kept in the principal's office. The Choctaw Tribal Schools will not be responsible for lost or stolen personal belongings.

Electronic Devices

The Choctaw Tribal School System is aware of advances in technology and values the role it can have in the education of students. Cell phones and other electronic devices may not be used, displayed, or turned on during class time unless directed by a teacher specifically to support instruction as included in the lesson plan or during lunch. Otherwise, students shall not use, display, or turn on cellular phones, iPods, mp3s, lasers, communication beepers, video phones, pagers, or other electronic devices during the regular school day. Cell phones should also be off and put away on school system operated vehicles and during an emergency drill/evacuation. It is a violation of the use of an electronic device to video another person without their consent.

Violations will result in the item being confiscated and turned in to the main office. The confiscated item will be returned only to a parent or guardian after school on the following school day for the first offense and a \$10 return fee will be charged. For the second offense, the item will be returned after seven (7) calendar days and a \$20 return fee will be charged. For the third offense, the item will be returned after thirty (30) days or at the end of the semester. If a student refuses to give a staff member his or her phone, it is automatic insubordination and a Level 3 infraction.

All items not claimed by the end of the year will be discarded. Choctaw Tribal Schools shall not be responsible for any broken, lost or stolen items. The confiscation of a cell phone during any statewide subject area or grade level testing must be reported to the Mississippi Department of Education and may result in the student's test being invalidated.

CTS provides technology devices that is needed for students to complete all necessary classwork; therefore, cell phones are not needed.

School officials may review the contents of any electronic device found at school if they have reason to believe that the contents of the phone could assist in an investigation or if there are allegations that there is inappropriate content on the device. Please refer to Discipline Plan policy for further guidance on this topic.

Gambling

Any items confiscated due to an act of gambling will not be returned.

Water Bottles

The school district has implemented water bottle filling stations, as opposed to water fountains. Any water bottle brought to school by a student must be clear or translucent and empty upon arrival at school.

Lost and Found Articles

Students who have lost an article of value should notify the principal's office. Students who have found an article of value should take it to the principal's office. Parents are encouraged to have the name of their child written on clothing tags, especially jackets.

Student Automobiles - High School

Written permission from parents must be obtained and approved by the principal before students may bring automobiles to school. Students may not sit in cars on the campus or in cars in the parking area.

Students may not leave campus by themselves or with other students unless permission to leave school has been granted from the office. All students leaving campus during the school day must check-out with the parking lot guardhouse attendant.

Students may only park in parking spots designated for student parking. All student vehicles are to be registered with the high school office and must display a parking decal issued by the school. Students must show a valid driver's license and proof of insurance in order to obtain a decal.

H. STUDENT SERVICES

Food Services

Choctaw Tribal Schools serves breakfast and lunch to all students as part of the school day. Students who attend the After School Program receive a snack; students enrolled in the dormitory program receive a snack and evening meal. Only one USDA meal application per household is needed per year and is required to complete student enrollment for CTS. Parents may fill out a paper application or an online application at **choctawtribalschools.strataapps.com**. When the meal application is filed, each student is placed into a free, reduced, or paid category, according to the household income. Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) provides full meal reimbursement for students classified as free and partial meal reimbursement for students classified as reduced or paid. The Tribe provides the remainder of the payment for students classified as reduced or paid, so every student in the Choctaw Tribal Schools is provided a breakfast and lunch meal at no cost to the student. If the meal application is not filled out completely and/or is not filled out correctly, the Tribe potentially pays for meals that would otherwise be reimbursed by MDE. Meal application status is also used to determine the school system's eligibility for specific school-based technology reimbursements. Meals and beverages served at CTS meet state and federal requirements.

Drop Out Prevention

Each school will prepare a dropout prevention plan to address the specific needs of their students and community. The plan should include goals for the school to address the identified needs of their student population, initiatives that will be implemented for students/families, and a means of evaluating progress toward the goals set. The local school team should include at the least the following members: the

principal, a parent, a special education staff member, a regular education teacher, the local RTI chairperson, and a student representative. An annual review of the plan is required. Students who have dropped out of school may be eligible to attend the Choctaw Virtual Learning Center.

Counseling Services

Guidance Counselors are employed at each school to aid the growth and development of students as they progress through their educational programs. Counselors strive to provide opportunities for each student to develop an understanding of his or her abilities and to base future academic, vocational, and personal decisions upon this knowledge.

School Counselors, Home/School Liaisons, and School Social Workers are required to make documented visits to the homes of students who have excessive absences before they contact the School Attendance Officer.

Counselors are actively involved in the following:

1. Student orientation and registration
2. Selecting programs and scheduling classes to meet students' needs
3. School testing programs
4. Identification of abilities, interests, and special aptitudes for educational placement and career planning, with emphasis for all schools including elementary, middle and high school students
5. Improvement of social and/or academic adjustments through both individual and group counseling
6. Appraisal and assessment activities
7. Obtaining information on college entrance requirements and available scholarships, assisting in college applications, and helping to secure funds
8. Consultation with faculty, parents, and administrators
9. Referral to outside agencies
10. Transition activities for all students as they move from elementary, to middle and then high school
11. Promotion of schoolwide Student Advocacy Plan to provide mentoring/support to all students

Library

Choctaw Tribal Schools follow the Mississippi School Library Guide that provides guidelines and procedures for school library programs in Mississippi's schools. This guide was developed by library professionals who believe that the educational integrity of a school is strengthened by the quality of the services provided by the school library program. The Mississippi School Library Guide includes state and national standards and guidelines that focus on the roles of the school library program and the school librarian as integral components in the teaching and learning process.

All students are entitled to use the library and check out books. The high school library is open before school and throughout the school day. High school students must have a hall pass signed by their teacher to be admitted into the library during the class period. Middle school and elementary school students will visit the library according to schedules. Students will be asked to return to their class at any sign of disturbance and will not be permitted to use the library for one week. Students will not be excused from the library for any reason except to return to class. Students must observe all rules posted in the library.

The purpose of the library is to enrich the educational program and to help fulfill the philosophy of the Choctaw Tribal Schools. In addition to meeting the needs of the educational program, the libraries will be used to stimulate independent reading, studying, and research. To provide an adequate program for both students and teachers, the following guidelines will be used:

1. Books may be checked out for a period of two weeks. Students may renew books.
2. Students will be held responsible for books checked out from the library and required to replace or pay for library books which are lost or destroyed.

Lockers

Lockers are assigned at the time of registration. Students are expected to keep lockers neat and orderly at all times. If locks are used, a combination or key must be on file in the principal's office. Books should not be left on the floor or on the top of the lockers. Books and other materials needed for the next two or more classes should be taken from the locker at the same time. This will relieve the congestion around the lockers and eliminate tardiness.

Choctaw Central Dormitory

Parents who are interested in the Choctaw Central Dormitory should contact the Dormitory staff to schedule a visit or to request a Dormitory Handbook.

Outside of School Educational Services

When medical reasons make it necessary for a student to be absent from school for ten (10) or more consecutive school days, that student may be placed on a homebound instructional program developed and implemented by the school principal, the school counselor, and the student's classroom teacher(s). Students will be placed on regular ISEP enrollment or a non-ISEP enrollment when they have an approved medical release for the homebound or hospital placement, and the guardian has not withdrawn the student from school. An ISEP ten-day drop rule in the student information system is required by BIE but does not serve as a formal withdrawal or dropout from school.

A written recommendation by the student's physician, including the expected date of return to school is required before the student can be assigned homebound status. The school will work with the family to help build a plan to assist the student in identifying ways to continue working on their academics. Homebound students will receive instruction from a certified teacher for a minimum of five (5) hours per week while on ISEP-approved homebound status. If parents/guardians fail to make the student available for homebound services, the absence may be considered unexcused and a truancy case may be filed.

Students with disabilities must have an IEP meeting before beginning homebound services and upon returning to school at the conclusion of those services since this would be considered a change in placement. Students on approved homebound status will receive at least 2 ½ hours of instruction from the general education teacher and at least 2 ½ hours of instruction from a special education teacher per week. The student may receive additional hours of instruction or services when outlined in the IEP.

Alternative Education Program

The Alternative Education Program is a program that provides an alternative placement setting for students with special discipline needs. Alternative placement must be based on a student's behavior problems; placement is not to be based on excessive tardiness or other attendance issues, but on the response to intervention (RTI) needs and documentation for the student. The program works to keep students in school, meet their current educational needs, and provide additional services as determined by a Discipline Review Committee, Multidisciplinary Team, or IEP committee. Placement is based on the following criteria:

1. Individual needs of the student as detailed in the academic file, disciplinary file, or IEP determination
2. Written recommendation of the school principal. (See Alternative Principal for referral forms)

Students with disabilities must have an IEP meeting prior to a change in placement. The IEP Committee will address the behaviors of concern, review current behavior plans and goals, and develop additional goals if needed.

In all cases, parents/guardians will have an opportunity to discuss their child's placement into the Alternative Education Program. If the team determines that the Alternative Education Program is the best placement for the student, the parent/guardian cannot override the decision, but may appeal the decision as outlined in the due process procedures of this handbook.

The home school will retain the student's enrollment and maintain student records in the student information system, including grades, attendance, etc.

During a student's placement in the Alternative Program, he or she is suspended from participation in or attendance at any extracurricular programs and activities (including practices) at the home school and also suspended from visiting the home school at any time during the school day.

The standard school dress code is required attire for the Alternative Program.

Students who are assigned to the Alternative Education Program will receive access to counseling from the assigned behavioral interventionist or counselor. Participation in assigned counseling is required as part of placement. Behavior Health services and/or Wellness programs will be utilized based on parent/guardian approval.

Students that do not follow rules or have poor behavior or excessive absences may have days added to their time in the alternative program. A student who is placed in the Alternative Education Program for drug and/or alcohol violations may be ordered by the Choctaw Tribal Court System to participate in the Youth Healing to Wellness Court Program and will comply fully with all program requirements. Participation in wellness or any other behavioral counseling program will be reviewed before a student is released from the Alternative Program.

For security and safety reasons, students in the Alternative Education Program may be required to submit to random testing for drugs and alcohol. Failure to submit to such testing is grounds for immediate expulsion from the Choctaw Tribal School System. Failure to pass such testing may be grounds for extension of placement time in the Alternative Education Program or other appropriate disciplinary action. Successful passing of such testing may be a requirement for return to the regular education program.

An exit meeting including the student, school administrators, and parents/guardians **must be held** either in person or by teleconference before the student may return to their school campus.

Principals will make a recommendation for the placement days served by the student at the Alternative Education Program. Students returning from Alternative placement will be placed on an automatic probation period of twenty (20) school days during which time students may be returned to the Alternative program without hearing for failure to comply with terms of probation.

Alternative Education is a program not a location. Alternative Staff will follow district policy for recording attendance, behavior and grades in the student information system. For more information about the Alternative Education Center, call 601-663-7777.

Students with Disabilities

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in the area of public elementary and secondary education, is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. Section 504 regulations require a school district to provide a "free appropriate public education" (FAPE) to each qualified student with a disability. An impairment in and of itself is not a disability. The impairment must substantially limit one or more of major life activities in order to be considered a disability under Section 504. An appropriate education for a student with a disability under Section 504 could consist of education in regular classrooms, education in regular classrooms with accommodations or supplementary services, or related services, and also includes special education services under IDEA. If an IEP has been developed and implemented for a student that is eligible for services under IDEA, then the requirements for a free appropriate public education required by Section 504 have been met. The school district may initiate a Due Process Hearing to resolve a dispute if the district believes the student needs a service in order to receive an appropriate education. If you have questions about Section 504 or

Special Education services you may call the 504 Coordinator at (601) 663-7813, or the Exceptional Education Coordinator at (601) 663-7643.

Gifted Program

Students who are identified as eligible, may receive additional services related to their areas of giftedness. Gifted students often show evidence of high achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in a specific academic field; and need services or activities not ordinarily provided by the general school program in order to fully develop those capabilities. Please contact your local school principal for more information on the school's talented and gifted program.

Transportation

Bus Policy

It is the policy of the Choctaw Tribal Schools to provide safe and reliable transportation to school each day. Daily bus absentee reports will be maintained at each school. Working with parents, the school strives to ensure that students are picked up and dropped off in a safe manner.

Transportation on school buses is a privilege offered to students. Out-of-boundary students are not guaranteed transportation services to tribal schools. Students who ride the school bus are under the authority of the Choctaw Tribal Schools Transportation Department and their respective schools. Parents and students are expected to know and abide by the Transportation Regulations and Safety Procedures. (also see Behavior Expectations)

If a student does not board the bus for three (3) consecutive days, the bus will no longer pick up until the parent contacts school administration to verify residence and request continued transportation services. Excessive occurrences will be considered neglect and reported to Children and Family Services.

Out-of-Boundary Bus Routes

Out-of-boundary students are not guaranteed transportation services. Students assigned to a special out-of-boundary bus route must be approved and the student must ride daily or notify the school and/or driver when they will not ride in order to receive continued transportation services. Agreements between the school and parents may have to be signed. Students who live outside the Pearl River community will be encouraged to consider enrollment in the dormitory.

Bus Route Changes (pick up & drop off location)

For the safety of all of our students, it is the policy of the tribal schools to limit changes to transportation unless there is clear written communication and verification made by school staff. Parents should send a note to the school if they need to make changes to their child's regular bus transportation routine. This note should include a phone number where you can be reached. In rare cases parents may phone the office, before 12:30 p.m., to notify the school of a change of transportation request. **Notifications after 12:30 p.m. will not be accepted** unless it is an extreme and rare emergency and is approved by the principal.

Transportation Regulations & Safety Procedures

The school bus is an extension of the classroom. School bus drivers have authority to keep order on his/her bus and are held responsible for the safety of students while on the bus and for any damages to the bus while on his/her assigned route. Only students who behave and abide by the rules and regulations may ride the bus. Safety is a top priority on all school buses and all passengers should not distract the driver thereby putting everyone on the bus at risk. Drivers are required to report incidents to the school principal immediately in order to maintain a safe and secure bus ride for all students. To ensure student safety, drivers inspect buses before and after every route. School bus rules and regulations are listed below.

At the Bus Stop

- Students should be at the bus stop at least five minutes before scheduled pickup time. The bus driver is not required to wait or honk the horn. Considerations will be given on cold or rainy days.
- Stand on the sidewalk or back from the roadway.
- When the bus approaches, stand clear until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- If you miss the bus, go home immediately.
- It is the responsibility of the parent to get the child to or from school if the child misses the bus.

Loading the Bus

- Form a single line and board the bus.
- Use the handrail as you go up the steps.
- Go to your assigned seat.
- Students will not be able to ride any bus other than their usual bus without a signed bus change form from the office that is approved by the principal. The note from the office must be given to the driver by the student when boarding the bus.

Conduct on the Bus

- All school rules that apply to conduct at school also apply on the bus.
- Bus drivers will give additional directions and rules to students as needed.
- No eating or drinking on the bus at any time.
- No loud hollering, singing, or distracting noises shall be permitted.
- No objects shall be thrown on the bus.
- No part of the body should be on the outside of the bus at any time.
- No scuffling, fighting, or obscene, vulgar, or profane language or gestures.
- Do not scratch, mark, or cut any part of the bus. Damage costs will be paid by the person responsible. Bus drivers are expected to inspect buses daily.
- The emergency door and exit controls should only be used during supervised drills or an actual emergency.

Getting off the Bus

- Stay seated until the bus comes to a complete stop.
- Use the handrail when exiting the bus.
- After boarding the proper bus, students may not leave the bus on its way to or from school, nor be checked out from the bus by anyone. For the safety of all students, parents must check students out from the school prior to bus loading times.
- Pre-K through 3rd grade students must have an adult present at the home when getting off the bus. It is the parent's responsibility to have adult supervision for children upon their return home from school. If no one is home to receive a student, the student will be returned to the school for a parent or authorized adult to pick up. Parents will be notified of the problem by phone call, school conference, or letter mailed to the home. After the third return of a child to school, the student will lose bus privileges for up to one (1) week. Additional occurrences will result in additional loss of bus privileges.

Bus Behavior Referrals

When a student is referred to the school office due to a bus referral, the school principal will notify the bus driver of the discipline resolution action. Based on the severity of the bus behavior (e.g. fighting, major defiance, or violations that create an unsafe condition on the bus) a student may be suspended or expelled from riding the bus and may also be assigned to the school discipline ladder and be on probation. Only the Director of Schools or Principal can lessen the length of a suspension once it has been given. This will only be done by in writing with a complete explanation that is forwarded to the transportation coordinator and bus driver.

I. HEALTH SERVICES

Wellness Policy

The Choctaw Tribal School System has adopted the Wellness Policy published by the Mississippi Department of Education and approved by the Choctaw Tribal Council as official policy and guidance for school programs, activities, and curriculum. This policy includes goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other promotions of student wellness, as well as guidance/requirements for school meals, snacks, refreshments, and food sales. All schools will follow the guidelines established in this policy. All students will receive at least thirty (30) minutes of physical education time per week from a certified P.E. instructor as mandated by the Mississippi Department of Education. School nurses, prevention instructors, health teachers, and cafeteria managers will provide information on diet and nutrition to all students in the Choctaw Tribal Schools. **This policy applies to all schools and programs within the Choctaw Tribal School System.** To help combat childhood obesity and improve children's health, the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (PL # 108-265) requires each local educational agency that receives funding for U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs to establish a local school wellness policy. With this requirement, the U.S. Congress recognizes that schools play a critical role in creating a healthy environment for the prevention of childhood obesity and for combating problems, like Type 2 diabetes, that are associated with poor nutrition and physical inactivity.

Rationale

The link between nutrition, physical activity, and learning is well documented. Healthy eating and activity patterns are essential for students to achieve their full academic potential, full physical and mental growth, and lifelong health and well-being. Healthy eating and physical activity, essential for a healthy weight, are also linked to reduced risk for many chronic diseases, like Type 2 diabetes. Schools have a responsibility to help students learn, establish, and maintain lifelong, healthy eating and activity patterns. Well-planned and effectively implemented school nutrition and fitness programs have been shown to enhance students' overall health, as well as their behavior and academic achievement in school. Staff wellness also is an integral part of a healthy school environment, since school staff can be daily role models for healthy behaviors.

Goal

All students in the Choctaw Tribal School System shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious food choices and enjoyable physical activity choices for a lifetime. All staff in the Choctaw Tribal School System are encouraged to model healthful eating and physical activity as a valuable part of daily life.

To meet this goal, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians adopts this Choctaw Tribal School System Wellness Policy with the following commitments to nutrition, physical activity, comprehensive health education, marketing, and implementation. This policy is designed to effectively utilize school and community resources and to equitably serve the needs and interests of all students and staff, taking into consideration differences in culture.

The Choctaw Tribal School System will:

- Offer a school lunch program with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.
- Offer school breakfast and snack programs (where approved and applicable) with menus that meet the meal patterns and nutrition standards established by the USDA and the Mississippi Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition Programs.
- Encourage school staff and families to participate in school meal programs.
- Operate all Child Nutrition Programs with school food service staff who are properly qualified according to current professional standards (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code EE-2E)

- Establish food safety as a key component of all school food operations and ensure that the food service permit is current for the Food Service school site.
- Follow State Board of Education policies on competitive foods and extra food sales (Mississippi Board of Education Policy, Code EEH).
- Establish guidelines for all foods available on the school campus during the school day with the objective of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity.

Commitment to Physical Activity

The Choctaw Tribal School System will:

- Provide physical education for all students (In accordance with Section 37-13-134, Mississippi Code of 1972, ann.).
- Ensure kindergarten students participate in physical activity for a minimum of 40 minutes during the school day. The 40 minutes does not have to take place continuously. This time should be used to help the child increase the skills involved in physical coordination (Kindergarten Guidelines).
- Offer a planned sequential program of physical education instruction incorporating individual and group activities, which are student centered and taught in a positive environment.
- Implement the 2013 Mississippi Physical Education Framework.

Commitment to Comprehensive Health Education

The Choctaw Tribal School System will:

- Provide ½ Carnegie unit of comprehensive health education for graduation (Mississippi Non-Public Schools Accountability Standards, Appendix A).
- Implement the 2020 Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework for grades 9-12

Commitment to Marketing a Healthy School Environment

The Choctaw Tribal School System will:

- Provide positive, motivating messages, both verbal and non-verbal, about healthy lifestyle practices throughout the school setting. All school personnel will help reinforce these messages.
- Involve students in planning for a healthy school environment. Students will be asked for input and feedback through the use of student surveys, and attention will be given to their comments.
- Promote healthful eating, physical activity, and healthy lifestyles to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and the community at school events (e.g., school registration, parent-teacher conferences, PTA meetings, open houses, health fairs, teacher in-services, and other events).
- Eliminate advertising and materials at the school that promote foods of minimal nutrition value.
- Work with local media, like newspaper, TV and radio, to inform the community about the health problems facing Choctaw children, as well as the need for and benefits of a healthy school environment.

Commitment to Implementation

The Choctaw Tribal School System School will:

- Establish a plan for implementation of the school wellness policy.
- Designate one or more persons to ensure that the school wellness policy is implemented as written.

Emergency Health Issues

All accidents involving a person or property should be reported to the teacher in charge and the principal. The school will call 911 for an ambulance if a student needs emergency medical attention during school hours. The school may also administer naloxone to a student in the event of a suspected overdose. If an accident is not life threatening but needs a doctor's treatment, the school may transport student for doctor's care. Parents will be notified as soon as possible. If parents cannot be notified immediately, the school will contact those individuals designated by the parent to be contacted in case of an emergency. Parents will be required to sign medical release forms for the child to be treated in a hospital.

Non-Emergency Health Issues

In a non-emergency situation, when a child becomes ill at school, proper attention will be given and parents notified. When needed, working with the family and health care professionals, the school will develop a plan to accommodate the needs of a student with a documented health issue. Only medications for which proper identification, instructions for dispensing of, and written parental consent and physician authorization are obtained will be given to children. Anti-tuberculosis medications will be given in school in accordance with the Mississippi State Board of Health guidelines. School personnel, with the exception of a registered school nurse, may not exceed the practice of first aid in dealing with pupil injuries and sickness. School staff should not attempt first aid nor any other procedures for which they have not been trained.

Family Planning (Abstinence-based)

Abstinence-based education will be delivered through prevention education presentations and be the main focus of prevention efforts related to teaching students about health and safety related to sexuality. Pregnancy and family planning services will be available to all students. This health education will be provided by the school nurse or his or her designee. If parents elect for their child to NOT participate in these trainings, they must contact the school principal.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Under conditions allowed by federal and state laws, health professionals can provide treatment services for sexually transmitted diseases (STD's) to students without parental consent. Under these conditions, school officials may release students to Choctaw Health Center professionals, provided written documentation of the authority under which the student can be released is provided to the school, and the health professional signs a statement accepting responsibility for the student.

Head Lice and Scabies

Near the beginning of the school year, and as needed, children in all schools will be screened by either classroom teachers, school staff members, or trained tribal employees for the presence of head lice and scabies (whenever one child in the class is identified, all will be checked). Educational information and related school procedures concerning the control of head lice and scabies will be provided following these screenings.

- A student found to be infested with head lice will be sent home as soon as possible with proper treatment and information.
- Upon return to school, students will be examined by the school nurse (or designated personnel) to ensure that proper treatment was performed and was effective. If the examination's results are unacceptable, the student will be again sent home until satisfactory results are obtained.
- When a student is sent home because of head lice or scabies, only the first day's absence may be counted as "excused;" all other days absent for this cause are "unexcused."
- After third positive screening within the school year, the community health center nurse will be notified. After the sixth positive screening within the school year, Children and Family Services will be notified.

Because of the serious nature of lice on one child infesting another child, the above guidelines will be strictly enforced.

J. EXTRACURRICULAR & INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES

As the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians promotes positive social involvement, wellness, and improved health for all Choctaw people, students are encouraged to participate in the various extracurricular activities and inter-scholastic athletic programs of the school. Students who participate in extracurricular activities must remember that they are role models for other students. High standards of behavior are expected of all participants. Students may be removed from participation due to behavioral misconduct.

Sportsmanship

Students who are spectators at athletic events are subject to the same rules that are observed in school and owe the athletes every consideration and respect possible. Students should refrain from the use of abusive language and inconsiderate treatment to visiting athletes and officials. Any unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of the spectators may result in probation for the school.

Conduct / Accountability

Extracurricular activities fall outside of school's academic curriculum. Participation by a student is voluntary. Extracurricular activities are not a student right, but a privilege. Students interested in participating in extracurricular activities are subject to minimum standards for qualifying. Students should read through the adopted School Discipline Plan. Students will be limited from participating in and attending activities based on their behavior and actions. The student behavior referral will list the specific dates and terms of the limitations for the student.

Any student participating in extracurricular events CAN be removed from his or her extracurricular event for a short-term or long-term period as deemed by the principal, assistant principal, coach, or athletic director at their discretion for ANY of the following reasons:

- Student has 5 or more unexcused absences in a 9 weeks period or 10 unexcused absences in a semester.
- Student has excessive tardies as defined by CTS tardy policy.
- Student is failing one or more classes (evaluated on a case-by-case basis).
- Student not meeting requirements, goals and/or expectations on benchmarks, enrichment/remediation material; not showing growth; not completing assignments or making-up missed assignments; poor behavior; in-school suspension; suspension; or alternative school.
- Students who are unable to produce a textbook for book check or unable to return the book at the end of the course, will lose his or her privilege to engage in extracurricular activities (e.g. sports, band, cheerleading, school clubs, school trips, field trips, dorm trips) until the book is returned or the debt is paid.
- If a student is placed in alternative school, the student becomes ineligible for participation in whichever sport for the duration of the current season. Once the student has completed their placement in alternative school they become eligible again. For example, if a student is placed in alternative school during football season they cannot play football the remainder of the season and will be eligible for basketball only if they are released from alternative school prior to the first practice, which is the official start of the season set by the Mississippi High School Activities Association.

Attendance Requirements

Students participating in activities (such as sports, band, cheerleading, Spring festivals) are required to attend classes on the day of the activity. Approved school activities allow for the school to count the student present-exempt. Such activities may include field trips, athletic contests, student conventions, musical festivals, science fairs, academic competitions, and similar activities. These times away from school do not count toward a student's number of absences for the semester or year. Students are given opportunity to make up all work in the same time frame as classmates. If work is not made up in a timely manner, the teacher must assign a zero (0) grade for incomplete work.

The Choctaw Tribal School System will not participate in activities that require any student to miss more than twenty (20) class periods or have more than five (5) planned absences in the same class period in courses for which grades and/or units of credit are issued during the school year. Students must not have been given any special inducement of any kind to attend a school to play on an athletic team. A student must present, from a physician, a statement of physical fitness for athletic competition.

Student Eligibility for MHSAA Activities

Students must meet the following criteria established by the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA):

7th and 8th Grade

To be eligible for participation as a seventh grader, a student must be promoted from sixth grade, and for participation as an eighth grader a student must be promoted from seventh grade. A pupil must have passed the core courses – Math, English/Language Arts (including Reading and/or Writing if a separate grade is given), Science, and Social Studies. The average of these core courses must be a “C” or above. For spring semester eligibility, the average of the core courses must be a “C” or above.

Pupils in the seventh and eighth grades participating in high school extracurricular activities must pass their grade level by achieving at least an average of “C” in the core courses (Math, English/Language Arts, including Reading and/or Writing if a separate grade is given, Science, and Social Studies) the previous year in order to be eligible to participate during the present year.

Choctaw Central High School

1. Students are required to pass six (6) credits toward graduation during the school year with a “C” average or better in order to maintain eligibility. The six units will be averaged as a whole, and the average must be “C” or higher in order to maintain eligibility. This will be done on a yearly basis.
2. Eligibility: Overall average of final grades must equal at least 2.0 GPA or “C” average. For Spring Semester Eligibility: Overall average of course grades must equal at least 2.0 GPA or a “C” average. **Note:** Grades for summer school, extended day/year programs, credit recovery classes, and correspondence courses must be earned prior to the beginning of the following semester or year.
3. Students with disabilities not pursuing a regular high school diploma will be academically eligible if they are making satisfactory progress according to the committee reviewing their Individual Education Plan (IEP). Those pursuing a regular high school diploma will be held to the same standards as all other students.
4. Any student who becomes nineteen (19) years of age prior to August 1 shall not be eligible to participate in any school athletic program.
5. Eligible students must not be a graduate of a four-year high school, enrolled in an institution of post-secondary education, or have participated in athletics above the high school level.

American Indian Day/ Week Celebration

1. One committee will be appointed by the principal of each elementary school and by the principals of CCHS/CCMS to coordinate all activities for American Indian Day activities. The coordinating committee will appoint sub-committees and assign tasks as needed to ensure that all activities are effectively planned and supervised.
2. Flyers and announcements will be made and distributed, clearly informing students about dates, deadlines, applications, and contact persons. It is the responsibility of students who wish to enter the Brave/Princess pageant to contact the appropriate person, get and complete an application, and submit the application in a timely manner.
3. At all elementary schools the Princess and Brave pageant will consist of three (3) categories for both Princess and Brave, regardless of the number of entrants. Those categories are:
 - (a) Pre-K - K
 - (b) 1st – 3rd Grades
 - (c) 4th – 6th Grades
4. After the application deadline passes, all applicants will be given a written explanation of all contest guidelines and responsibilities, along with a written summary of judges’ criteria.
5. It is each contestant’s responsibility to obtain a dress, shirt, accessories, and other items.
6. Middle School and High School American Indian Day activities will begin at 12:00 noon and end at 3:00 p.m.

Homecoming Royalty Selection

Sponsors in charge of homecoming activities will notify the appropriate elementary school of the deadlines and guidelines for selection of the Crown Bearer and Flower Girl. Students must have a good academic and disciplinary record and have approval from the parent/guardian to participate.

Candidates for homecoming royalty cannot have any behavior referrals. After elected, if a candidate receives a behavior referral before the events of homecoming, she may be withdrawn from the homecoming court. If enough time is permitted, the runner up will be asked if interested in being a part of court.

- Candidates must not have 5 or more unexcused absences. Candidates must not have 10 or more tardies. After elected, if a candidate receives a behavior referral due to tardies before the events of homecoming, she may be withdrawn from the homecoming court. If enough time is permitted, the runner up will be asked if interested in being a part of court.
- Candidates must have a letter grade of “C” or higher in each academic course.
- An application for candidacy must be completed and approved by both the homecoming committee and school administration in order for students to be considered and campaign for the homecoming court.
- The election process will begin with registering interest; there will be no nominations. After every signee has been approved of meeting the standard criteria, names will be placed on a ballot. Any female will have the opportunity to register if interested. Each class will vote for his/her own grade and grade representative.
- Each grade will have a representative (Grades 9-11 will have 1 representative per grade; seniors will have 3 representatives).
- There will be 1 Homecoming Queen (3 contestants, seniors) The top 3 seniors who attain the most votes, will represent the Senior Homecoming Court. At that point, all 3 contestants will have the opportunity to campaign for Homecoming Queen. All students in grades 9-12 will vote electronically for 1 of the 3 senior contestants.
- Escorts must be submitted and approved prior to homecoming; non-student escorts may be subject to a background check.
- Votes are tabulated electronically.
- Only students in grades 9-12 will be permitted to participate in Homecoming Ceremony activities.

The designated elementary school will select a first-grade boy to be Crown Bearer and a first-grade girl to be Flower Girl. It is the responsibility of the child’s parents/guardians to arrange transportation to and from homecoming practices and to provide the dress, suit, and accessories for this event. The following schedule will be used to rotate the selection of Crown Bearer and Flower Girl through the elementary schools:

2026 – Conehatta Elementary
2027 – Red Water Elementary
2028 – Standing Pine Elementary

Field Trips

Class trips and field trips can be a good learning experience for students, parents, and teachers; however, all school related trips must be well planned in advance and related to the academic or extracurricular activities of the school. Additionally, the following must occur before students are taken away from campus:

- The proposed activity and plans for adequate transportation, supervision, and resources must be approved by the school principal.
- Parents must be fully informed of the purpose of the trip and of all planned activities. Written permission for student participation as well as provisions to provide emergency medical treatment, if necessary, must be received from the child's parent or guardian before a student will be allowed to take part in these activities.
- All required paperwork to secure funding, transportation, meals, etc., must be turned in to the school finance office no later than two (2) weeks prior to the event.

Neither the school nor the school system shall sponsor or support any Dormitory trips, or any Senior trips, other than educational field trips taken as part of the regular school year academic program.

NAYO Events

The Choctaw Tribal Schools will not schedule or participate in any softball/baseball or other MHSAA activities from Thursday through Monday of Easter weekend. In order to receive an excused absence for attending NAYO events, students must have good attendance and receive prior approval to miss school. No more than three (3) days will be excused for NAYO events.

Fundraising

All fundraising activities conducted on school property must have the prior approval of the school principal who will be responsible for ensuring that all student activity accounts are properly administered through the tribal centralized accounting system. All funds received by the school must be IMMEDIATELY deposited at MBCI finance department. The MBCI Office of Finance and Accounting will maintain custody of all funds. Only fundraising activities sponsored by the school or school-related student/parent organizations may be conducted on school property. All fundraising activities involving the sale of food items must be conducted in accordance with the Choctaw Tribal School System's Wellness Policy.

All funds raised by the individual members of a group become the property of the group. Individual students have no claim to funds except for group participation expenses. No student may expect any refund in the event that he or she cannot participate in the group activity. Generally, these funds may be redistributed to students only. These funds may not be provided to staff members, chaperones, or group sponsors for any reason other than lodging or per diem expenses.

All groups raising funds for any reasons are required to have a parent meeting prior to beginning fundraising in which all policies and guidelines are thoroughly explained. Parents will sign a form at this meeting indicating their understanding of fundraising policies.

Student Birthday Parties

No birthday parties may be held during instructional hours; parents may not send refreshments, party favors, gifts, or decorations for a party.

Deliveries at Schools

Schools will not accept deliveries of flowers, candy, gifts, and other such items at any time.

Officially Approved School Clubs and Student Organizations

To become an officially approved club, an *Application to Establish Class and Club Account* must be completed and filed with the school principal. The application requires a statement of purpose of the organization, a proposed staff sponsor(s), and fundraising information. The completed application will be reviewed by the school principal and forwarded to the Choctaw Tribal Schools district office for district level approval by the School Business Manager, the Assistant Director of Schools, and the Director of Schools. The application will then be presented to the Education Committee and the Tribal Chief for review and final approval. Intercom announcements, fundraising, campus events, and on-campus advertisements/notices are limited to officially approved extracurricular clubs, classes, and sports teams of the school as well as tribally recognized entities and community partners. Applications are available upon request to the school principal and due by September 1 of the current school year.

Elementary and Junior Beta Club Eligibility

The following policy is for all Choctaw Tribal Elementary Schools and Middle School:

- New inductees must have a first nine weeks average of 86/B or higher in each subject.
- All clubs will have an induction ceremony in November of each year.
- Returning members must have a nine weeks average of 86/B or higher in each subject.
- If a returning member has a first nine weeks grade below 86/B, they are put on probation and must bring their grade up to an 86 or higher by the end of the second nine weeks to maintain their membership. If this does not happen, that student will lose membership in the Beta Club for the remainder of the school year, but with the required grades, they are eligible for membership in the next school year.

- Beta members shall lose membership to the club for either of the following:
 - Beta members shall have no more than two (2) office referrals per year.
 - Beta members shall have no suspensions.

Students who are members in good standing are eligible to attend the annual Beta State Convention. Students who place first, second, or third in the State Convention competitions are eligible to attend the National Beta Convention; however, the Choctaw Tribal School District will only pay the registration and travel expenses for first place winners in any categories (individual, team or group). Second and third place winners are eligible to attend the National Convention, but are responsible for their own travel expenses. Travel expenses must be reviewed by Finance.

High School Beta Club Eligibility

Membership in the Beta Club at Choctaw Central High School is based on academic performance, character, leadership, and service, as outlined by the national and local bylaws.

Choctaw Central High School Beta Club members must meet the following criteria:

- To be eligible for Beta Club membership, a student must earn and maintain an overall average grade of 90/A or higher at the end of the previous school year. Additionally, any out-of-school suspension or Alternative Education Program placement during the school year when induction is being considered will nullify a student's eligibility.
- Beta Club members must be on a diploma track for graduation and performing at or above grade level.
- If a student was a member in good standing in another Beta Club at the end of the previous year, they will be admitted into the CCHS Beta Club the next year.
- If a student was on probation at another school during the last school year, but was in good standing at the end of the school year, with no office referrals nor suspension – then the student will be admitted into the CCHS Beta Club.
- Since CCHS is on the block schedule, student eligibility to continue in the club or being put on probation will be based on grades halfway through each course. If a student is on probation and the grade is not pulled up to 90 or higher by the end of the course, the student will lose membership.
- If the student's grades are 90 or lower at the end of any course, that student will lose membership for that school year.
- Beta members shall lose membership to the club for either of the following reasons, regardless of grade eligibility: 1) Beta members shall have no more than 2 office referrals per year, and 2) Beta members shall have NO suspensions.
- To participate in club activities, Beta Club members will be required to participate in fund raising activities and be in good standing with the club.
- Eligibility to attend the Beta State Convention will be based on the following criteria:
 - 1) Active participation in the club based on Google classroom club response, fund raising efforts, community service, and attending called meetings.
 - 2) December graduates are NOT eligible to attend Beta Convention.
 - 3) Any student with ten (10) or more unexcused absences will not be eligible to attend Beta Convention.

K. SCHOOL SAFETY

Visitors

All visitors must report to the main office and sign in. Unknown visitors will be required to provide photo identification.

Adults

All parents and adult family members are encouraged to visit the school and to be actively involved in their children's education. All visitors shall obtain permission and a Campus Pass from the principal before entering a class. Adult visitors are certainly welcome in our school since visitation usually expresses wholesome interest in our efforts to maintain a quality program. Visits should be cleared in the principal's office so that proper protocol is followed. Spontaneous visits often prevent our staff from helping to make the visit meaningful and enjoyable.

The Choctaw Tribal School System encourages parents/guardians, family and community members to visit schools when appropriate and to become approved volunteers for the system. Volunteer Service Applications may be required for visitors who work with student groups and/or activities. Volunteers are subject to a background investigation.

A "Visitor" is defined as any person on Choctaw Tribal School System property who 1) is not a current Choctaw Tribal School System employee who is authorized to be on the property and 2) has not been certified as a Volunteer by the MBCI Background Adjudication Office. Visitors to the school must report to the office unless the reason for the visit is to attend an athletic event or another after-school or schoolwide event where visitors are invited. During the school day when children are present, visitors must be issued a visitor badge by school staff that will be displayed at all times during the visit. Visitors, including school vendors, will be accompanied during the entire duration of the visit by a Choctaw Tribal School System employee. Visitors are only allowed to use single occupant restrooms.

A "Volunteer" is defined as any person on Choctaw Tribal School System property who 1) is not a current Choctaw Tribal School System employee who is authorized to be on the property and 2) who has been certified as an approved Volunteer by the MBCI Background Adjudication Office after the required tribal, state, and federal background checks. Volunteers to the school must report to the office and will be issued a volunteer badge that will be displayed at all times when they are volunteering.

Persons interested in becoming an approved volunteer should contact the local school principal to obtain an application form and background checklist which must be completed and approved before one may serve as a volunteer in the schools. Since the background application and approval process is extensive and could take several months to complete, interested individuals are encouraged to apply well in advance. Volunteers are only allowed to use single occupant restrooms.

Students

Students not enrolled in the Choctaw Tribal Schools are not authorized to visit during the school day unless it is for a specific purpose and has been approved by the school principal. For any such approved visits, students must follow a pre-arranged schedule.

Non-School Persons

All staff must instruct students that under no circumstances are any non-school persons allowed into the building unless a teacher has been given directives when the person has an approved pass or is a part of a rescue team. All parents/guardians and other visitors must enter by the front door.

Loitering by students or visitors in the parking lots – including in vehicles – is not permitted. Once a student has arrived on the school premises, he or she is not to "socialize" with any person who is not a student or staff member at the school without permission from the principal's office. Socialize means to talk to, get in the car with, or accept food and drinks from.

Hall Passes

Students should obtain hall passes when they are required to be in hallways without their teacher. Teachers should note the time a student obtained the pass and the location to which they are going. School staff will be required to monitor all hallways during the day for appropriate student passes. The safety and security of our students is a high priority.

Violence Response

We strive to have a safe and violent-free campus. This includes bullying and intimidation of any kind. When physical contact is witnessed between students and/or staff that results in injury of a person, the principal will contact the Department of Public Safety. School Security Officers shall act as first responders and make the scene safe by separating parties as soon as possible, according to training received. Charges will be filed by the school for any disruptive incidents witnessed by school staff related to violence.

Violent acts witnessed by any person should be reported to a reliable adult. In the case of wanting to remain anonymous, students may report acts of violence on STOPIT or WeTip.com as listed on the tribe's webpage (call 855-4-THE-REZ). Every incident reported will be investigated.

Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention Policy

The Choctaw Tribal School System does not condone and will not tolerate bullying or harassing behavior at school. Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern or gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that (a) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, or (b) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits. A "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct, in the determination of the school principal or Director of Schools, renders the offending person's presence in the classroom a disruption to the education environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the students and teachers.

Reporting and Response: Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of bullying or anyone with knowledge that a student or school employee has been subjected to bullying or harassing behavior, shall report the alleged acts in writing immediately to a school official. A student may report bullying anonymously, considering that the school's ability to act based only on an anonymous report may be limited. Reports should be made promptly but no later than five (5) calendar days after the alleged act or acts occurred. The complaint will be investigated promptly with parents being notified of the nature of any complaint involving their student.

Reporting ANY Inappropriate Activity

All students can access STOPit from the front page of the Choctaw Tribal School System website. It is an anonymous reporting app/website through which anyone can report any type of activity such as violence, bullying, threats, illegal activity, cyberbullying, or inappropriate activity of any type 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Our first priority is to keep everyone safe. This added safety measure can help us know about possible activities before they become issues that could've been prevented. Students, parents, guardians, and community members are also encouraged to report ANY inappropriate activity on WeTip.com, as listed on the tribe's webpage. Students have access to report any inappropriate activity at any time.

Internet Safety

Under the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the Choctaw Tribal Schools provide training to students on internet safety. Our network administrator filters controversial, obscene, and/or harmful material found on the internet. Schools are required to certify that they educate minors about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with others on social networking websites. Schools are required to educate students on cyberbullying awareness and response

Safety Inspections

When a principal or the principal's designee has reasonable suspicion to believe that any item prohibited by school policy, rules, or tribal or federal law is on school property, that official may search lockers, desks, personal property, and/or persons for that item. To ensure a safe school environment for all students and staff, a metal detector may be used in random and unannounced searches.

At any time when a student is on school property or at a school-sponsored event, a principal or principal's designee may conduct a search of the student's person or possessions (backpack, purse, etc.) if the school official has reasonable suspicion that the student is in possession of illegal or prohibited items. Such searches shall be conducted in an appropriate manner, in private, and witnessed by another adult. Students may be required to empty pockets and remove jackets, sweaters, hats, shoes, etc., but not pants, shirts, or blouses, as part of the search. If the search is of the student's person ("pat-down" search), the school official conducting the search and the witness must be of the same sex as the student. Under no circumstances is a school official authorized to conduct a "strip search" of a student.

If it is determined that a more thorough search is justified, the principal/designee will contact the student's parent and detain the student under constant supervision until the parent arrives at school. If the parent will not or cannot assist the school official in locating the suspected prohibited item, the police will be contacted for assistance.

Throughout the year, there will be occasional and unannounced inspections by tribal law enforcement's drug detection K-9 officer/unit. Campus security officers will assist the school principal in completion of all safety inspections and searches to ensure that the campus is a safe environment conducive to learning. If illegal items are found during a search, the school will initiate school discipline and notify tribal law enforcement when further investigation or charges are warranted.

Gangs

Students on tribal school property, on the way to or from school, or at any school-sponsored activity shall not conduct themselves in any manner, whether in appearance or behavior, that demonstrates their affiliation with any gang.

Canine Searches

Throughout the year, there will be occasional and unannounced inspections by tribal law enforcement's drug detection K-9 officer/unit. At all times the K-9 officer/unit is present on school grounds, students will be restricted to their classrooms or locations that will not be swept to ensure that the dogs do not come into direct contact with students. If a K-9 indicates the possible presence of drugs in a room, vehicle, etc., further searches will be conducted by law enforcement officers or school officials. All rooms, vehicles, etc. so indicated by a K-9 will be searched without exception. All personal property and all areas of the campuses of Choctaw Tribal Schools may be searched. Students will be held responsible for any prohibited items found in their rooms, cars, or belongings at school. If prohibited items are found, the student will face disciplinary action according to this handbook and may be prosecuted under tribal law.

Notice of the Presence of Asbestos Containing Material (ACM)

In accordance with 40 CFR Part 763.93(g)(4), the campuses of Bogue Chitto Elementary School, Conehatta Elementary School, Pearl River Elementary School, Red Water Elementary School, Standing Pine Elementary School, and Tucker Elementary School have been certified as asbestos-free.

However, the campuses of Choctaw Central High School and Choctaw Central Middle School have areas of asbestos which have been abated and posted. Concerned individuals should contact these schools to review the respective schools' asbestos management plans.

Child Protection Reporting Policy

This policy applies to all schools and programs within the Choctaw Tribal School System.

Pursuant to federal mandatory reporter laws, all school personnel are mandated reporters and are individually responsible for making reports of suspected abuse or neglect. Any persons, including specialists providing services to students under contract, subcontract, or grant, shall report suspected abuse or neglect. Reporting procedures are as follows:

- A. As mandated reporters, when abuse or neglect is suspected, the individual to whom the abuse is initially disclosed or who observes it, shall: (1) report the suspected abuse or neglect to the principal, or if unavailable, the assistant principal, immediately; **and** (2) complete the Indian Child Protection Referral (ICPR) form and submit it to the appropriate entities, i.e., Choctaw Police Department (CPD) or Choctaw Children and Family Services (CFS) in less than 24 hours. (See the forms section in the CTS Staff Handbook)
- B. Delivery of the ICPR form shall be preferably made in person to the Choctaw Police Department or Choctaw Children and Family services in a confidential envelope.
- C. The delivery of any such form shall not be delayed due to the absence of administrative school personnel nor shall any administrative school personnel seek to influence the mandatory reporter to refrain from submitting the form to an appropriated agency as required by law.
- D. **In addition to mandatory reporters following ICPR protocol, the principal, assistant principal, counselor, or school nurse shall make immediate notification by telephone to the Choctaw Police Department of suspected abuse or neglect and receive further instruction from law enforcement.** In the event that law enforcement instructs the school to contact the Choctaw Department of Children and Family Services (CFS), the school official must immediately call CFS. Otherwise, law enforcement will be responsible for initiating a call to CFS.
- E. School personnel are prohibited from discussing any incidents of reported abuse or neglect except with the principal, assistant principal, nurse, counselor, law enforcement, CFS or the Attorney General's Office.

If you have information about Child Abuse or Neglect, or Theft, Vandalism, Illegal Drugs, Bullying, Assault, or any other illegal activity call 855-4-THE-REZ or go to wetip.com.

Video and Audio Monitoring

To the extent modern technology provides tools to maintain safety and security, the use of technology such as video surveillance cameras is supported within the Choctaw Tribal School System. Video surveillance may be utilized in and around all schools within the system, on district property, and on school transportation vehicles. Cameras may be equipped with audio recording capabilities as well. Video surveillance shall be in accordance with applicable laws pertaining to such use. The district also shall comply with applicable law related to maintaining video recordings.

Exclusions: Video and Audio monitoring is not permitted in areas where there is a reasonable expectation of privacy. Recording of teacher instruction for purposes of completing a licensed personnel performance evaluation is not intended to be covered by this section of the monitoring policy and shall not be permitted except as approved by the Principal and the employee. Recording of students for purposes of their educational programming is also not intended to be covered by this policy, except as approved by the parent/guardian.

Decisions regarding placement, notification, use, storage, security, or viewing requests of video and audio will be handled and maintained at the Department of Schools by the Director of Schools according to district procedures, in alignment with the most current safety and security best practices and applicable family educational rights and privacy laws.

L. EMERGENCY PLAN

Emergency Plans and COOP

Each school must follow the provisions of its Emergency Management Plan and the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP Plan), which is on file at the school office and at Choctaw Tribal Schools Maintenance. To account for the safety and well-being of all students, teachers should take their roll books and check roll immediately upon reaching the designated area. In the event a state of emergency is declared and an alternative learning method is necessary for the safety and well-being of students and staff, the CTS Emergency Management Plan will be followed. This plan is on file in the district office and portions will be posted on the school website.

School Closure

There may be days that weather conditions will not permit schools to be open. On these occasions the Office of the Tribal Chief and the Director of Schools will make the decision on whether or not to close school. Announcements of school closings will be made on the local radio and television stations. Additional postings may also be posted on the school messenger system and school web pages.

On the days that weather conditions change for the worse after students are in school, the Office of the Tribal Chief will make the decision to close schools. Every effort will be made to contact parents before students are transported home.

Weather Drills

Notification for tornado or severe weather will be made by intercom. A tornado watch means weather conditions are favorable for a tornado. A tornado warning means one has been spotted. ALL students are to be moved to a school hall. While in the halls, students are to be seated near the walls with their knees brought up to the sides of the head. If students are between classes when an alert is sounded, they should report to the nearest hallway.

Fire & Other Emergency Drills

In case of fire, students are immediately instructed to go to a designated area, under the supervision of the teacher, away from the building. All windows are to be closed and the door is to be closed on the way out of the classroom. Students are to proceed in an orderly yet rapid manner to the designated area. No student is to open a locker for any reason. In case of explosion, students will be directed out of the building to a safe place. First aid will be administered as needed.

Lockdowns

Code Yellow Lockdown is a lockdown which allows the school to continue with the normal school day but forbids outside activity and unnecessary room to room transit. No unauthorized personnel are to enter the building. This code will be used when an incident occurs outside the school campus and there is NO immediate or active threat.

Code Red Lockdown is a lockdown in which there is a perceived immediate and imminent threat to the school population. The campus and all buildings are secured. Students and staff are secured in rooms. No one is allowed to enter or leave the campus, buildings, or rooms until the situation is resolved

Lock Down Drills

Lock Down drills will be conducted four times a year according to the following procedure:

1. Lock all exterior doors.
2. Lock all interior doors.
3. Assign staff to secure specified and pre-arranged areas; monitor conditions.
4. Recognize need and be ready for contingencies.
5. Turn off gas, water, and electricity immediately if directed to do so.
6. Always send two people for initial assignment.

Daily Lock Down procedures:

1. All exterior doors, except the front entrance, must be locked at all times.
2. All interior rooms must be locked when vacant. Teachers must lock the class room when at recess or lunch.
3. All teachers must have a key to the classroom and to the nearest exterior door.
4. Students are not allowed to unlock doors or to stay in a classroom without an adult present.
5. All closets and storage areas must be locked at all times.

M. STUDENT RIGHTS

School Prayer

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and the Choctaw Tribal School System condone voluntary prayer and meditation in the Choctaw Tribal Schools. Prayers and meditations shall be strictly voluntary, and no students shall be required to participate.

Due Process Proceedings

The following student rights and requirements for due process are required by 25 CFR Part 42.

Rights of the Individual Student

Individual students at BIE-funded schools have, and shall be accorded, the following rights:

- The right to an education that may take into consideration Native American or Alaska Native values;
- The right to an education that incorporates applicable federal and tribal constitutional and statutory protections for individuals; and
- The right to due process in instances of disciplinary actions.

Principals and teachers will carefully adhere to all Due Process procedures and will investigate every incident to ensure that victims and innocent students are not punished /disciplined as if they were violators of school rules. It is unfair and unjust to dispense equal punishment for unequal offenses.

Due Process for Victim

Individual students (not his or her parents or guardians) at BIE-funded schools have, and shall be accorded, the following rights:

- The right to participate in disciplinary proceedings either in writing or in person;
- The right to provide a statement concerning the impact of the incident on the victim; and
- The right to have the outcome of the proceedings explained to the victim and to his or her parents or guardian by a school official, consistent with confidentiality.

Due Process for Suspension

Suspension is defined as any exclusion from school of a student not exceeding ten (10) days.

- No suspension will be made without giving the student an informal hearing by the principal. This will include a review of the charges and an opportunity for the student to present his or her version of what happened.
- The parents/guardians of the student are to be notified by phone call or in person of the suspension and the school shall mail the notification of the suspension, the notice being mailed within twenty-four (24) hours of the suspension. In addition, a school official must document all attempts made by phone or home visit to notify the parent/guardian of the suspension.

Due Process for Suspension Ten (10) days or more or Expulsion

Expulsion is defined as any exclusion from school of a student in excess of ten (10) days.

- Written notice of charges within a reasonable time prior to a hearing. Notice of the charges shall include reference to the regulation allegedly violated, the facts alleged to constitute the violation, and notice of access to all statements of persons relating to the charge and to those parts of the student's school record which will be considered in rendering a disciplinary decision.

- A fair and impartial hearing will be granted the student prior to the imposition of disciplinary action, absent the actual existence of an emergency situation seriously and immediately endangering the health or safety of the student or others. In an emergency situation the official may impose disciplinary action not to exceed a temporary suspension, but shall immediately thereafter report in writing the facts (not conclusions) giving rise to the emergency and shall afford the student a hearing which fully comports with due process, as set forth herein, as soon as practicable thereafter.
- A student may appeal an expulsion through the following levels: (1) the Director of Schools, (2) the Tribal Chief.
- The student has the right to the following:
 - o To have present at the hearing the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) (or their designee) and to be represented by lay or legal counsel of the student's choice. Private attorney's fees are to be borne by the student.
 - o To produce, and have produced, witnesses on the student's behalf and to confront and examine all witnesses.
 - o A record of hearings of disciplinary actions, including written statements of fact and conclusions in all cases of disciplinary action.
- The student shall not be compelled to testify against him or herself.
- The student has the right to have all allegations of misconduct and information pertaining thereto expunged from the school record in the event the student is found not guilty of the charges.
- Students who have been expelled from other school districts must complete their expulsion prior to being accepted into the Choctaw Tribal School System.

N. STATEMENT OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The Choctaw Tribal School System does not discriminate in policies, procedures, employment, admissions, or eligibility for class or program participation on the basis of race or racial heritage, color, national origin, religion, gender, or disability in violation of the law. However, in accordance with federal law, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians adheres to a publicly announced policy and practice of extending preferential treatment to qualified Indians in regard to employment. Additionally, student enrollment in the Choctaw Tribal School System is limited to children who hold a Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood which certifies one-fourth or more Indian ancestry, according to Title 25 of the Code of Federal Regulations in Part 31.

All students shall be guaranteed equal access to all school programs, courses, services, and extracurricular activities regardless of gender or disability.

Any employee complaints of discrimination shall be handled in accordance with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians Administrative Personnel Policy and Procedures entitled "Grievance."

Student or parent/guardian complaints of discrimination will follow due process procedures.

O. FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY

The Choctaw Tribal School System follows provisions granted under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, and confidentiality law under Public Law 94-142. Under these laws the parents of students enrolled in any educational institution receiving federal funds are given certain rights concerning the school records of their children. The following rights are accorded you under the act:

1. You are entitled to have access to your child's school records upon request. The request should be directed to the building principal.
2. You are entitled to inspect and review the contents of your child's school records, and to challenge the contents if you feel they are inaccurate, misleading, in violation of the privacy or other rights of the student, or if they contain inappropriate data.

3. Before any school records will be released to third parties (colleges, potential employers, etc.) who have requested copies of your child's school records, the school must have your written consent, or the written consent of the student who is 18 years of age or older.
4. Upon receipt of a subpoena or judicial order requiring the principal to relinquish control of your child's record, you will be notified of the subpoena or judicial order before the principal will relinquish control of the records.
5. Whenever your child enrolls in another elementary or secondary school outside this district, you will be notified of the transfer of the record.
6. The school assures that it will provide for the legal access and safe keeping of such records in compliance with the Privacy Act of 1974 and Public Law 94-142 by providing fireproof and locked files for your child's records.
7. The law allows "directory information" about students to be made public without specific permission from parents. You are entitled, however, to request the deletion of certain information about your child from school directories.
8. The school will maintain a list containing the signature, the date, and the reason for all persons receiving access to your child's records. The law, however, allows school officials, including your child's teacher to have access to school records without signature. You are entitled to have access to this list.
9. When your child becomes eighteen (18) years of age, the rights formerly accorded to you as a parent with respect to school records will become the sole rights of the student.

If you have questions concerning the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, you should call the principal of your community school.

P. SCHOOL – HOME COMPACT

Because we believe that the education of every student must be a partnership between the school and the home, we make this compact to demonstrate our acceptance of our shared responsibilities. By the school's presentation of this compact in this handbook and by the parent/guardian's signature on the enrollment application (handbook agreement statement), we hold ourselves accountable to each other to do our very best in providing an educational system and a home environment that will promote learning and achievement.

The school agrees to the following:

- to provide high quality curriculum and teaching
- to demonstrate high expectations of all students
- to maintain a supportive and safe learning environment
- to offer individual parent-teacher conferences at least once a year
- to provide frequent reports on student progress, in addition to regular report cards
- to welcome parents as visitors, observers, or volunteers in reasonable settings
- to offer a variety of parent meetings each year, with childcare provided

Parents and Guardians agree to the following:

- to encourage and monitor regular school attendance
- to encourage and monitor the completion of homework and other assignments
- to monitor the child's rest, encouraging healthy patterns of sleep
- to monitor television viewing, establishing appropriate limits
- to encourage positive use of extracurricular time
- to volunteer, if possible, to help in school class or extracurricular events
- to attend parent meetings whenever possible

Q. PARENT AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS 'RIGHT TO KNOW' NOTIFICATION

Staff members from all Choctaw Tribal Schools want to provide you with needed information about your school, its programs and progress. If you need more information from the school related to school topics or programs, please contact your local school principal. If you would like to schedule a meeting, you may call your local school to set up an appointment. An interpreter will be provided if requested. Some common topics include the following:

- Educational qualifications of your child's teacher and paraprofessional
- Understanding the Choctaw Tribal Schools / Mississippi Curriculum: Reading, Math, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies or State Standards
- Language Assessment Test: Reading, Writing and Oral Scores (Pre-K)
- Understanding the Choctaw Language and Culture Standards
- State Assessment, Language Arts & Mathematics: MAAP Grades 3 – 8
- State Assessment, Science Test: MS MAAP-Science Assessment Grades 5 and 8
- Choctaw Central High, ACT assessments
- District Assessment, Nine-week tests & Standards Mastery
- Annual School Report Card (measures progress of the school)
- District support services, tutorial services, counseling
- Technology resources, school webpage, parent portal
- After School Program
- Exceptional Education services (Special Education and Talented / Gifted)
- Library/Media resources
- Transportation
- Emergency & safety plan
- Nursing, behavioral & mental health support
- Referrals for services outside of school
- Other items of interest not listed

We want to work with you so that the Choctaw Tribal Schools can continue to be an excellent place for your child to learn. You can circle items of interest, tear out this page, sign the page and send to the school. We will be glad to get back in touch with you on these items. You can also visit us on the district website at www.choctawtribalschools.com or stop by your local school for more information.

R. HOME SCHOOLING

If a parent chooses to not enroll their child in the Choctaw Tribal School System and plans to homeschool their child, the parent must complete a *Certificate of Home School Enrollment* form with the District Truancy Officer. The request must then be approved by the Director of Schools. The form requires the following information: school year, student name, date of birth, Parent or Guardian name, phone number, mailing address, email address, type of education program, and a description of education program for home instruction. Please have this information with you when you intend to complete the form. Incomplete information will delay or deny the request. **Home schooling is a parental choice, but Choctaw Tribal Schools does not provide any resources for students that are not enrolled as a student in the Choctaw Tribal School System.**

Parent Note Excuse Form

Student's Legal Name: _____

Date of Absence(s): _____

Please mark the absence reason that applies and attach documentation (if required*):

_____ Medical absence*

_____ Serious Illness/Death in immediate family*

_____ Parental

_____ Court Proceedings*

_____ Administrative approval (prior to absence)

Explain absence:

This excuse must be received within 3 days of your child's absence or prior to absence when approval is required. If an excuse is not received in the time required, the absence will be considered unexcused. If you have questions, please check the Parent Portal, or contact the school Attendance Clerk.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Parent Note Excuse Form

Student's Legal Name: _____

Date of Absence(s): _____

Please mark the absence reason that applies and attach documentation (if required*):

_____ Medical absence*

_____ Serious Illness/Death in immediate family*

_____ Parental

_____ Court Proceedings*

_____ Administrative approval (prior to absence)

Explain absence:

This excuse must be received within 3 days of your child's absence or prior to absence when approval is required. If an excuse is not received in the time required, the absence will be considered unexcused. If you have questions, please check the Parent Portal, or contact the school Attendance Clerk.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

NOTES: