

Choctaw Tribal Schools

2023 - 2024

PARENT/STUDENT

HANDBOOK



CHOCTAW TRIBAL SCHOOLS **PARENT AND STUDENT** **HANDBOOK**

School Year 2023-2024

Choctaw Tribal Schools
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

Adopted by MBCI Tribal Council Resolution CHO 23-06 on April 11, 2023

You can find us on the internet at

www.choctawtribalschools.com

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

Cyrus Ben, Tribal Chief

Choctaw Tribal Council

Bogue Chitto
Angela Hundley
Ronnie Henry, Sr.
Kendall Wallace

Pearl River
**Deborah Martin
Kent Wesley
Nigel Gibson

Bogue Homa
Michael Briscoe

Red Water
Richard Isaac
Sharon Johnson

Crystal Ridge
Christopher Eaves

Standing Pine
Loriann Ahshapanek
Richard Sockey

Conehatta
Timothy Thomas, Sr.
Greg Shoemake
Hilda Nickey

Tucker
Wilma Simpson-McMillan
Demando Mingo

**Chairperson of the Tribal Education Committee on Education

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This handbook applies to all schools of the Choctaw Tribal School System unless specifically noted otherwise, including all school/program/athletic activities held during non-instructional times (after school, evenings, weekends, and holidays), and including 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 and particularly for the middle/high school of the Choctaw Tribal Schools. We encourage you to sign up for the parent portal, 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.

**Choctaw Tribal Schools
P.O. Box 6008
122 Division of Schools Drive
Choctaw, MS 39350**

Phone: 601.650.7302 Fax: 601.656.9454

Dr. Randy Grierson, Director of Schools

Mrs. Delnita Jones, Assistant Director of Schools

Bogue Chitto Elementary School

**13241 Hwy 491 North
Philadelphia, MS 39350**

Principal: Dr. Ken McMullen

Phone: 601.389.1000 Fax: 601.389.1002

ken.mcmullen@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/High School

**150 Recreation Rd.
Choctaw, MS 39350**

Phone: 601.663.7777 Fax: 601.663.7776

Principal: Alaric Keams

alaric.keams@choctawtribalschools.com

Tucker Elementary School

**126 East Tucker Circle
Philadelphia, MS 39350**

Phone: 601-656.8775 Fax: 601.656.9341

Principal: Dr. Greg Carlyle

greg.carlyle@choctawtribalschools.com

Conehatta Elementary School

**851 Tushka Drive
Conehatta, MS 39057**

Phone: 601.775.8254 Fax: 601.775.9229

Principal: Brian Parkman

brian.parkman@choctawtribalschools.com

Choctaw Career Technical Education Center

**404 Industrial Rd, Suite 2
Choctaw, MS 39350**

Phone: 601.663.7801 Fax: 601.663.7840

Administrator: Sherry Tubby

sherry.tubby@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

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

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 and the Director of Schools to execute policy and 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 | 650-7662 |
| Assistant Director of Schools..... | 663-7667 |
| 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 |
| Choctaw Central High School..... | 663-7777 |
| 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 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.

Halitoh!

Holissoh ápisa ilappak falamat hash áyalaká yakókih oklilah. Hapi náyoppah okle chipesakat.

Chahta Immi hicha Chahta annopa átokmá okchalichih bannat oklah kil atóksalech Hello!

We say thank you for choosing to come 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!

4

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

United States of America i shapha hicha im áyalhtoka yá 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

2023-2024 School Calendar *Draft-12-10-2022*

July 31, 2023 – New Staff Tribal Orientation – Location and Time TBD

District Wide Title 1 Professional Development Day – August 1-2, 2023 @ local schools-Certified Staff only

District Wide Title 1 Professional Development Day – January 8, 2024 @ local schools-Certified Staff only

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|----|----|----|----|----|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1st Semester (90 Student Days) Aug 3 – Staff Work Day Aug 4 – Student’s First Day Aug 11 – Nanih Waiya Day Aug 30 - Students Dismissed at 2:00 pm Sep 4 – Labor Day Holiday Sep 5 – Progress Reports Sep 22 – American Indian Day Holiday Sep 27 – Students Dismissed at 2:00 pm Oct 6 - End 1 st Term Oct 9 – Chahta iNittak Day Oct 10 – Begin 2 nd Term Oct 16 – Comm Rel/Rep Cards Oct 25– Students Dismissed at 2:00 pm Nov 13 – Progress Reports Nov 10 – Veteran’s Day Holiday Nov 20-24 – Thanksgiving Holidays Dec 21 – 60% Day for Students Dec 21–End 2 nd Term Dec 22-Jan 5 – Christmas Holidays 2nd Semester (90 Student Days) Jan 8 –PD Day Certified Staff only Jan 9 – Begin 3 rd Term Jan 15 – M L King Holiday Jan 16 – Comm Rel/Rep Cards Jan 31-Students dismissed at 2:00 pm Feb 12 – Progress Reports Feb 19 – Presidents Day Feb 28 – Students dismissed at 2:00 pm Mar 8 – End Third Term Mar 11-15– Spring Holidays Mar 18 – Begin 4th Term Mar 25 - Community Rel/Rep Cards Mar 29 – Good Friday Holiday Apr 15 – Progress Reports Apr 24 - Students dismissed at 2:00 pm May 23 – End of Term May 23 -60% Day for Students May 23 - Last Teacher Day | 2023 | | | | | | | 2024 | | | | | | | | |
| | August | S | M | T | W | T | F | S | January | S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| | | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| | | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| | | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| | | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |
| | | 19 Instructional Days | | | | | | | 16 Instructional Days | | | | | | | |
| | | 21 Contract Days | | | | | | | 22 Contract Days | | | | | | | |
| | September | | | | | | 1 | 2 | February | | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| | | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| | | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| | | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | | |
| | | 19 Instructional Days | | | | | | | 20 Instructional Days | | | | | | | |
| | | 21 Contract Days | | | | | | | 21 Contract Days | | | | | | | |
| | October | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | March | | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| | | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| | | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| | | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| | | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | | | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| | | | | | | | | | | 31 | | | | | | |
| | | 21 Instructional Days | | | | | | | 15 Instructional Days | | | | | | | |
| | | 22 Contract Days | | | | | | | 21 Contract Days | | | | | | | |
| November | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | April | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
| | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | |
| | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | |
| | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | |
| | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | | | 28 | 29 | 30 | | | | | |
| | 16 Instructional Days | | | | | | | 22 Instructional Days | | | | | | | | |
| | 22 Contract Days | | | | | | | 22 Contract Days | | | | | | | | |
| December | | | | | | 1 | 2 | May | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | |
| | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | |
| | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | |
| | 24/31 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | |
| | 15 Instructional Days | | | | | | | 17 Instructional Days | | | | | | | | |
| | 21 Contract Days | | | | | | | 17 Contract Days | | | | | | | | |
| Students Dismissed Early @ 2:00 pm for PLC's | 7 | | | | | | | Federal/Tribal Holidays | | | | | | | | |
| Aug 30 | 22 | | | | | | | School Holidays | | | | | | | | |
| Jan 31 | 1 | | | | | | | Staff Work Days | | | | | | | | |
| Sep 27 | 2 | | | | | | | 60% Days | | | | | | | | |
| Feb 28 | 3 | | | | | | | Title 1 Professional Development Days | | | | | | | | |
| Oct 25 | 180 | | | | | | | Student Instructional Days | | | | | | | | |
| | 210 | | | | | | | Total Contract Days | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | First Day of School | | | | | | | | |

A. STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Eligibility for Enrollment

To be eligible to enroll in the Choctaw Tribal Schools (CTS) a student must be at least ¼ degree of Indian blood as verified by a valid Certificate of Degree of Indian Blood. Students who do not meet this requirement may receive a provisional enrollment status only after approval through the tribal education committee. Students who do not meet the enrollment eligibility requirements should not be enrolled but referred to the District Registrar to file for permission for the provisional enrollment. 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. However, a student who has enrolled before his or her twenty-first birthday and remains continuously enrolled, may continue completion of the program until his or her twenty-third birthday.

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.

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, which is available on most mobile devices including cell phones.
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 on school and district websites and on official CTS social media. Publishing of **individual** student names or photographs to on-line social media is prohibited by Choctaw Tribal Schools.
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 Packet

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 will be the completion of the meal application. The meal application can be accessed at choctawtribalschools.strataapps.com. The meal application can also be found on choctawtribalschools.com under the Food Services tab. A student is not officially enrolled until Part 1 and Part 2 of the enrollment is completed. 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. There are announced times allotted for school registration. Enrollment documents are available each year prior to the start of the school year. 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.**

New Student Enrollment and Annual Enrollment Requirements

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/Guardians signature required)
- USDA application for free and reduced meals (all families must complete)
- Privacy Act Information
- Parent/Student Agreement Form (In the back of this Handbook)
- 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.

Transfer Students

A student who transfers from one school to another 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
- Withdrawal Form and Grades from Previous School
- Notify school transportation of the change so that bus service can be arranged.

Transfer of Records

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

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 un-graded 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 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.

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 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. (See Behavior Expectations.)

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.

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 attendance. **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 at any time during 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 protocol 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

At ALL CTS elementary schools, the school day begins at 8:00 am, and ends at 3:00 pm. At Choctaw Central Middle School (CCMS) and Choctaw Central High School (CCHS), the school day begins at 7:45

a.m. with breakfast served from 7:30 a.m. until 7:50 a.m. At the Middle School and High School, the school day ends at 3:15 p.m. In grades 7-8, the After-School Program runs from dismissal until 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday. There are no after school programs on Friday. The High School has special after school and occasional Saturday tutorial sessions that will be announced when offered.

Each elementary school has listed their Length of School Day information.

School start times and schedules will be consistent unless otherwise notated. Each elementary school has listed their Length of School Day information below:

**Bogue Chitto Elementary; Conehatta Elementary; Pearl River Elementary;
Red Water Elementary; Standing Pine Elementary; Tucker Elementary**

Doors Open: 7:30 a.m.

Breakfast: 7:30 a.m.–7:55 a.m.

School Begins: **8:00 a.m. promptly**

Lunch 1st Lunch 11:30 a.m. 2nd Lunch 12:00 p.m.

Pre-K Dismissal: 3:00 p.m.*

Dismissal 3:00 p.m. (Regular

School) After School Dismissal:

4:30 p.m.

Office Hours: Monday–Thursday 7:30–4:30, Friday 7:30 – 3:30

Choctaw Central Middle School; Choctaw Central High School

Doors Open: 7:30 a.m.

Breakfast: 7:30 a.m.–7:55 a.m.

School Begins: **7:45 a.m. promptly**

Lunch 1st Lunch 11:30 a.m. 2nd Lunch 12:00 p.m. 3rd Lunch 12:30 p.m.

Pre-K Dismissal: 3:00 p.m.*

Dismissal 3:15 p.m. (Regular

School) After School Dismissal:

4:30 p.m.

Office Hours: Monday–Thursday 7:30–4:30, Friday 7:30 – 3:30

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 form. 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 first through fourth periods (12:00 noon). 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 fourth period 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, Report Late to Class, and Early Checkouts (Tardiness)

Instruction begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. at all elementary schools and at 7:45 a.m. at CCHS and CCMS. Instruction begins promptly at 7:55 a.m. at CCHS and CCMS and 8:00 a.m. for all elementary schools.

Being tardy is very disruptive to your child's morning routine as well as those of his/her classmates, while being 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 or later, 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 excused.

Tardiness to school, which includes late check ins, tardiness during the day at CCHS and CCMS, and early checkouts will be monitored closely. 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 missed so he/she is not left behind academically. A student with continual late check ins, tardiness during the day, and early checkouts which accumulate to a partial day or whole day absence, will be referred to the school attendance officer for unexcused absences from school.

All schools will implement the following procedures on dealing with tardiness, late arrivals or early check outs:

PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH EXCESSIVE TARDINESS- YEARLY

| <u>Tardies / Late check-ins / Early Checkouts:</u> | <u>Action to be taken / Staff responsible:</u> |
|---|---|
| At five (5) | Classroom teacher makes a documented contact to parent/guardian giving a copy of the document to counselor and/or designated staff. |
| After five (5) and up to ten (10) | Principal or designated staff makes a documented personal notification by phone, letter, and/or home visit to parent/guardian. |
| After ten (10) | Student will face restrictions related to extracurricular participation with excessive tardies. The counselor or designated staff will make a documented home visit or conference at school, with the parent signature on file, establish a behavior improvement plan/contract and then |

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| | make a referral to the School Attendance Officer, if required. The principal will complete a behavior referral. |
| At fifteen (15) | The teacher, principal or counselor (as determined at each school) will continue to monitor tardiness, late arrivals and early checkouts to continue to work with families on a plan to improve the student's attendance by updating the behavior improvement plan/contract. Documentation of contacts will be made in the student information system to be reviewed by the school attendance officer. The principal will complete a behavior referral for each additional set of five tardies. A Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and/or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) must be conducted. |
| At twenty (20) | The School Attendance Officer will turn the student and/or parent into truancy. A Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) and/or Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be adjusted. |

Students are expected to be on time to school and classes. Students are allowed ample time between classes. Students who are not in class when the tardy bell rings, will be considered tardy. Students with excessive unexcused tardiness are subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the school discipline policy. 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 missed so he/she is not left behind academically.

Referrals for tardiness are based on the overall recorded tardiness of the student and not only tardies to individual classes.

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

Sign Out / Checkout Procedure

All students must be signed out through the office to be dismissed. 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 on the *Student Checkout Permission* form and be at least 18 years old. **If there is any question regarding a student's safety, check out 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. Any checkout for an unexcused reason results in a maximum grade of 65%/D when work is made up in a timely manner.
- Absences resulting from late check-in or early check-out will be determined as excused or unexcused in accordance with policy. Minutes not present in school, whether excused or unexcused are still considered as absences. 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. Checkouts 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 (3) three 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

If your child is going to be absent from school please call the office the morning of the absence before 8:30 a.m. or notify the school in advance when you know your child will miss for approved reasons, according to details below. 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.

3. **Parental (6 days)** - Students shall be allowed three (3) excused days per semester in 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 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. All unexcused absences from school result in a maximum grade of 65%/D for the daily grade. Extenuating circumstances will be considered by the school leadership team to determine if extended absences are needed per the request from the parent/guardian.
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 opportunity, 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 as unexcused.
- Absences in which students are checked out from school without explanation will be recorded as unexcused.
- Any checkout for an unexcused reason results in a maximum grade of 65%/D for the daily grade.
- 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 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.

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.

PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

| <u>Number of Unexcused Absences</u> | <u>Action to be taken/ Staff responsible:</u> |
|---|--|
| At three (3) unexcused absences and/or ten (10) unexcused late check ins or checkouts | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Designate staff to monitor attendance and make contact to parent/guardian giving a copy of the parental document to counselor and/or designated staff monitoring parental contacts. 2. Document contacts in student information system. |
| At five (5) unexcused absences and/or any additional unexcused late check ins/outs that result in accumulation of the same number of absences. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Designated staff make a documented visit to the home of the student who has excessive absences before the School Attendance Officer is contacted, and 2. Designated school staff sends referral to the School Attendance Officer. |
| For every additional five (5) unexcused absences and/or unexcused late check ins/outs that result in accumulation of the same number of absences. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teacher, principal or counselor (as determined at each school) will continue to monitor attendance and make a |
| | <p style="text-align: center;">documented home visit or conference at school, in order to continue to work with families on a plan to improve the student's attendance. Documentation of contacts will be made in the student information system to be reviewed by the school attendance officer, and</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Designated school staff notifies School Attendance Officer of continued absences. |

Absences Due to Suspension

Absences due to suspension are always unexcused and can impact a student's grades and referrals to the School Attendance Officer. Please work with your child and the school staff to work on your child's behavior in order to minimize suspensions from school.

Authorized School Activities

- A student is not counted absent when the student is participating in or attending an authorized school activity with prior approval.
- Students who are assigned to In-School-Intervention will be counted as 'present' and given opportunity to make up all work in the same time frame as their peers in class.
- At 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).

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 tardy, 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 data-base 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

OVERVIEW

The high school uses the Mississippi College and Career State Standards that have been adopted by the state of Mississippi and approved by the Bureau of Indian Education. The elementary schools implement the Mississippi Department of Education PreK-8th grade curriculum framework and the approved Mississippi College and Career Ready Standards (MCCRS), as adopted by the Mississippi Department of Education and approved by the Bureau of Indian Education, BIE.

The academic standards set a clear understanding by telling what students are expected to learn by the end of each subject. The first step to success for each student is to master the learning standards. The academic standards are important because they prepare all students for success in college and the workplace. Choctaw Tribal Schools believe, Alla Momat Ikkana Chih; that ‘all children will learn’ challenging materials and reach their full potential. Choctaw language and culture, English language arts, math, science, social studies and art instruction are provided by the classroom teacher through a variety of teaching strategies. Learning will become engaging and challenging with the standards by including instructional technology, real world knowledge and a connection with all subjects.

In an effort to share information about each child’s education, the school will provide parents with curriculum information to keep them informed about the subject requirements and standards. The information will be a guide of the key skills your student will learn in subjects throughout the school year. The instructional goal is for teachers to plan classwork effectively to meet the needs of the student and assist parents in understanding their student’s success with the academic standards. 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 an overview of student progress and achievement. The curriculum department of Choctaw Tribal Schools works with teachers to ensure that the alignment with curriculum, assessment and instruction is current with new research-based educational trends.

Pre-Kindergarten Philosophy and Goals for Four-Year-Old Children

The pre-kindergarten philosophy is based on the belief that early childhood is a time crucial to maximize each child's potential. The blending of the culture with the academics reflected in the learning environment is directly aligned to the curriculum's domains and skills developed by the Mississippi Department of Education. The domains provide the foundation of academics, social, emotional, physical, and motor development for our children.

Goals for children attending the Choctaw Tribal Schools' Pre-Kindergarten program:

- celebrate and respect Choctaw culture and language
- develop an enjoyment for learning
- increase intellectual ability to think and interact with others
- promote positive relationships with peers, teachers, and other adults
- encourage the child to express himself/herself in conversations with others
- prepare opportunities to develop self-help skills
- schedule opportunities for supporting peers in cooperative learning experiences
- model and instruct oral language literacy through speaking, listening, thinking, writing, and dramatic play activities
- increase skills and competencies in mathematical reasoning and scientific investigation
- promote physical growth through gross and fine motor activities
- provide a high-quality research-based program

Kindergarten Philosophy and Goals

The kindergarten program is arranged to address social, emotional, physical, and intellectual areas of development. The blending of culture with the academics is reflected in the creation of a learning environment directly aligned to the standards and skills of the Mississippi Department of Education's curriculum design. Daily activities are planned around learning centers including art, social studies, science, reading, writing, and math literacy. Learning centers allow the opportunity to explore, investigate, question and predict.

Goals for children attending the Choctaw Tribal Schools' Kindergarten Program:

- celebrate and respect Choctaw culture and language
- develop an enjoyment for learning
- promote positive relationships with peers, teachers, and other adults
- provide a caring safe environment that promotes freedom to experiment and explore
- oversee activities promoting cooperation and the ability to work and learn
- provide opportunities for children to become independent curious learners
- implement a systematic phonics instruction program to promote literacy standards in reading, writing, listening, speaking, and dramatic play
- increase instruction using skills and competencies with mathematical practices and scientific inquiry
- increase physical coordination and motor skills
- provide a high-quality research-based program

Grading Policy

Students in grades 1-12, receive numerical grades on their report cards at the end of each nine-week grading period. 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; along with 1st-6th Grade students (ONLY in activity courses such as Physical Education, Art, Music and Computer) attending the Choctaw Tribal Schools will 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% |
| Homework | 10% |
| | 100% |

Mastery Connect, a district purchased education resource will provide Benchmark/Nine Weeks common assessment tests for grades 1-12.

Semester grades will be the average of the two nine weeks' grades. The over-all 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.

Assessments/Tests

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 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.

Requirements for Semester Exam Exemptions (3rd-12th Grade Students only)

1. Parental Approval – A parental approval form must be signed and on file in the principal’s office.
2. Any Out-of-School or In-School Intervention makes a student ineligible for exam exemption.
3. Students may be exempt from exam(s) if the student has less than 2 unexcused absences, pending the student has satisfactory work in each classroom.
4. Academic and Attendance:
 - Full Unit Course
90-100 average with no unexcused absences and no more than six (6) unexcused absences.
 - Half Unit Course
90-100 average with no unexcused absences and no more than three (3) unexcused absences.
5. Miscellaneous Information
 - a. Students with no more than six (6) unexcused absences for the year may be considered for exemption.
 - b. A student who has met the conditions set forth in 1, 2, and 3 above still has the option to take the exam if he/she chooses.
 - c. All exams taken will be used to compute the final grade. This includes exams taken by choice.
 - d. Exemptions are to be determined on a course by course basis. Thus, a student could possibly be exempt in one course but not exempt in another.
 - e. Mastery Connect Benchmarks Assessments are not permissible for exemption.
 - f. Students exempt for ½ credit (semester courses) may be exempt, if they meet the previous criteria but must attend class during that period.
 - g. First semester exemptions will be based on the combined first and second nine week’s absences. Second semester exemptions will be based on the combined third and fourth nine week’s absences.

Special Education Grading Policy

Students with disabilities are often able to achieve the same achievement levels of 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 / 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, student’s transition to high school will be considered to make 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 (RtI)

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 RtI process in an effort to improve student achievement and behavior. The RtI 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 and grades 1 – 8 shall be administered a state-approved screener within the first 30 days of school, at mid-year, and at the 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 TST for interventions as specified in the MTSS/RtI guidelines, if any of the following events occur:

- Grades K-3: A student has failed one (1) grade
- Grades 4-12: A student has failed two (2) grades.
- A student failed either of the preceding two grades and has been suspended or expelled for more than twenty (20) days in the current school year.
- A student scores at the lowest level on any part of the Grade 3 or Grade 7 statewide accountability assessment.

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 a-d 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 DISTRICT WIDE DATA SYSTEMS

The following assessments will be administered district wide. 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) |
| Mastery Connect Benchmark | 1 – 8, EOC | 3 times per year (Fall, Winter, & Spring) |
| i-Ready | K – 8 | 2 times per year (Fall, Winter) |
| Choctaw Language & Integration Project | K – 3 | 2 times per year (Fall & Spring) |
| ACT | 11 th and 12 th | Annually |
| WorkKeys | 11 th and 12 th | 1 time per year |

DATA NOTEBOOKS

The data from each of the assessments listed above will be kept in data notebooks. During data meetings, on each level, educators will evaluate the data and answer the following questions:

What does the data say?

How do I know?

How will my instruction change because of these results?

- District Level – Maintain school reports
- School Level – Maintain teacher reports
- Class Level – Maintain student reports

Standardized Testing Program

Standardized testing measures student achievement, academic growth from year-to-year, and how well instructional objectives are being taught in the classroom. Mississippi End of Course (aka “Subject-area tests”) will be given to all students enrolled in English II, Algebra I and Biology I. Students in grades 3-8 will take the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program ELA (English/Language Arts) and Math Assessment (MAAP) or Mississippi Academic Assessment Program-Alternate (MAAP-A). Grades 5 and 8 will also take the Mississippi Academic Assessment Program Science (MAAP-SCI). High school students who are eligible, will also take the MAAP-A for Math, ELA and SCI. These 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.

High School students in the 11th grade will take the American College Test (ACT) during class hours. The purpose of the ACT is to measure College and Career Readiness of students before they enter the 12th grade. In addition, all seniors must take the ACT during the senior year. Students working toward diploma endorsements should complete additional exams required for those endorsements (See Diploma Options).

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 TO 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.
- Teachers are expected to have lesson plans before students use the internet, which includes researching sites that are used.

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 connect 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 has 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.

Excelleration Program

The CTS “Excelleration 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 get ahead. 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**

The “Excelleration 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 and should be encouraged by parents and family members. In order for positive work habits to be developed, parents are encouraged to help their children create an appropriate space within the home for reading and studying. 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 pay for the replacement cost. The classroom teacher will conduct daily textbook checks and turn in a report of missing books to the curriculum coordinator at least **two (2) times** per nine weeks. The report of missing books will also be turned into the school principal for privilege restrictions until the book is found or the debt paid. 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. 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.

Honor Roll

Honor Roll for Choctaw Central High School Students - *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.*

Honor Roll for Choctaw Central Middle School Students and Elementary Students- *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, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Reading (if Reading is taught for a separate grade). 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, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Reading (if Reading is taught for a separate grade).

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 will be based only on the first three nine weeks.

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 available to parents/guardians for review. A school may give other awards according to its own established criteria.

Physical Education

In grades K-8, each student will receive Physical Education instruction that is based on the P.E. curriculum of the Mississippi Department of Education. Every student will receive a minimum of thirty 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 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, language arts, 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.

Promotion/Retention Policy - Choctaw Central High School

Students at Choctaw Central High School will be promoted based upon mastery standards/objectives for each course taken. Successful completion of a course shall be based on the student having a final grade of 65 or higher.

Promotion of high school students will be based solely upon the acquisition of Carnegie units. 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 and 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 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 (RTI) 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) would have to 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 school 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 Learning* section in this handbook).

Class of 2021 and earlier:

T 24 Credits requirement (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 semester course for graduation.

Students with disabilities have two graduation options – the traditional High School Diploma or the Certificate of Completion. The student's IEP Committee determines the student's exiting option upon entering the 9th grade. That decision is reviewed annually and may be changed if determined appropriate by the IEP Committee.

Class of 2022 and after:

GRADUATION OPTIONS: Mississippi High School Diploma and Endorsement

Options Requirements Traditional Diploma

Earn 24 credits (Carnegie Units) in a selection of required classes including English, Math, Science, Social Studies, Technology or Computer Science, College and Career Readiness, Health, Fine Arts, Physical Education and electives. 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 a 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

Score at least 17 on ACT English section

Score at least 19 on ACT Math section

Achieve at least a 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 a 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 Central High School requires a Senior level Choctaw History semester course for graduation. Beginning with the class of 2022, students who earn an academic or distinguished academic diploma endorsement will automatically qualify for admission into any of the state's public universities.

Choctaw Collegiate Academy

Choctaw Collegiate Academy– CCHS and Community College Eligible students, as determined by the principal, are encouraged to consider enrollment at East Central Community College full-time or full time 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 East Central Community College or full-time at East Central Community College. Students pursuing this option must meet ALL criteria for CCHS and East Central Community College 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.

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 he/she leaves 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

ends, all seniors will know 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:

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

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

E-1 courses include Accelerated English, Chemistry, Geometry, Algebra II, foreign language, Human Anatomy and Physiology and SREB/College Math

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

University Admission Standards

To be competitive for admission into 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.

Dual Enrollment – CCHS and Community College

Eligible students, as determined by the principal, are encouraged to consider enrollment at one of the area community colleges during their junior/senior year at CCHS in order to earn college credit. 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.

College and Career Preparation

Deadlines to take the ACT, complete college admission requirements and applying for scholarships are an important part of college and career preparation. The school will share information and deadlines with their students through bulletin board postings, reminder notifications, email blasts and postings on parent and student school portal. 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 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, Office 365 email, 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.

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 the teachers concerning their children; however, since interruption of classes interferes with the learning process for other students, it is requested that the parent 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 login 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/guardians user name and password only allows 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. Parents/guardians will receive a response to their concern within ten (10) school days.
 - 1 .If your account gets locked, send your request in writing to the local school NASIS Administrator. Due to confidentiality issues, WE CAN NOT UNLOCK YOUR ACCOUNT OVER THE STOPIT website or application.
6. PHONE.
7. The Portal is subject to electronic monitoring by the Choctaw Tribal School

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

Code of Conduct

D. BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

One of the characteristics of an effective school is a safe, orderly climate conducive to teaching and learning. Students and staff members share the responsibility for creating and supporting a positive school climate. The degree to which students accept their responsibility and demonstrate the type of behavior that promotes a learning climate has a definite effect on their academic achievement.

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

One of the characteristics of an effective school is a safe, orderly climate conducive to teaching and learning. 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, *and*
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:

| |
|---|
| Student must be on schedule with earning Carnegie Units. |
| Student must have taken ALL required end of course assessments. |
| 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. |
| Students must have an ACT score on record. |
| ***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 5th 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.

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, and the use of 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 3rd 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. Excessive occurrences will be considered neglect and reported to Child Protective Services.

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.

| <u>Prohibited</u> | <u>Allowed with Caution</u> | <u>Required</u> |
|---|---|--|
| No flip flops, sandals or slide shoes allowed No pierced body jewelry or decoration, except for ear rings No visible tattoos and scarification No students shall have their body parts painted with paint, liquid paper, ink, or other distracting marks | Skinny pants, leggings, tights, or yoga pants must have a dress or skirt that covers the hips Shorts, skirts, and dresses must | Closed toe shoes Clothing that does not disrupt the learning environment and promotes school safety |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>No bandanas visible on campus at any time* Except as used as a mask during mask mandates.</p> <p>No hoods, caps, bandanas, or any head covering of any kind indoors (including classrooms, halls, and buses).</p> <p>No profane, inflammatory, vulgar or immorally suggestive language on clothing, including alcohol, tobacco slogans or messages or graphics of illegal drugs</p> | <p>extend at least to the end of the student's fingertips when the student is standing straight with arms down by the side</p> <p>Tank-tops, muscle shirts can be worn but only with a t-shirt underneath</p> | <p>Athletic shoes when participating in physical education</p> |
| <p>No halter-tops allowed</p> <p>No see-through shirts/blouses</p> <p>No low-rise pants or other clothing that exposes the midriff or waist area</p> <p>No colors, bandanas, symbols, signs or dress associated with gangs or cults will be tolerated</p> <p>No masks allowed</p> <p>No sleepwear or underwear outside the clothing</p> <p>No blankets worn as jackets</p> | <p>Costumes (with no masks) are allowed only on special approved activity days</p> | |

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.

E. DISCIPLINE PLAN

The 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, 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. **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 2

- A. Student/principal conference,
- B. Up to 1 day of in-school intervention (ISI), 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.

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 3

- A. Student/principal conference,
- B. Up to two (2) days of in-school intervention (ISI) or up to one (1) day of out-of-school suspension (OSS), or combination of ISI 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, amend or modify recommendation of the principal,
- 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 district discipline hearing, and
- H. Possible other restrictions may be required due to suspension, expulsion, or Alternative placement.

SUGGESTED steps for Behavior offenses:

| <u>Behavior</u> | <u>Step</u> |
|---|-------------|
| 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 | 5 |
| Forgery or Pretense | 1, 2 |
| 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 vaping | 3, 4, 5 |
| Use or attempted use of dangerous objects / weapons / explosives*** | 5 |
| Use, sale, distribution, or possession of alcohol and drugs*** | 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. Student punishment may carry over to the next school year.

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.

Parent Notification of Discipline

In the case of discipline referrals, the school will make every effort to contact parents to keep parents informed of their child’s behavior. **Parents must keep phone numbers current at the school in case they need to be contacted. Listed below are the expectations for each 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.

Step 2 and Step 3 and Step 4. Principal, Assistant Principal or In School staff will contact parent by telephone to notify of corporal punishment or placement in In School Intervention (ISI) classroom. If unable to reach after three 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 with the parent. All attempts to reach parent/guardian will be documented in NASIS.

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.

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.

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.
- Additionally, 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 intervention is a mandatory alternative discipline measure.**
- In all cases where corporal punishment is administered, a discipline form must be completed and mailed to the parent. Behavioral data will be maintained in the school 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 Intervention

In-School Intervention Class begins at 7:55 A.M. and ends at 3:15 P.M. A student must attend all day to receive credit as one day In-School Intervention.

In-School Intervention (ISI) is a disciplinary action of removing a student from a scheduled class and placing him or her in a closely supervised environment in an effort to correct behavior. The ISI classroom will be monitored by an adult employed by the school system. The intent of ISI 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 ISI 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 that will be turned into 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 ISI. 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 ISI placement. Completed work will be graded and used as part of the student's grades. Placement in ISI does not count as an absence, but the student must complete assigned work within (3) three days of returning to the classroom in order to receive a grade.

Students assigned to ISI 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 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. 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(s), 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.

Policies and Procedures for Weapons, Drugs, Illegal Substances, Alcohol, Tobacco or Vaping Products (Weapons Policy, including Explosives)

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 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 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 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 Choctaw Police Department. Principals shall use their own discretion in each instance, not involving a gun, concerning the necessity of notification of the appropriate law enforcement authority.

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 for one calendar year 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 individual found to inappropriately possess, distribute, misuse/abuse any prescription or non-prescription drug 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 for one calendar year 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.

C. Any student found to possess, distribute or use tobacco or vaping, in any form, shall be disciplined according to step 3 of the school discipline ladder. Subsequent violations shall be dealt with at the appropriate higher step to include referral to the Discipline Review Committee.

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 phones or electronic device, then 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 days.**
- In addition, anyone who is caught forwarding the video to other students/persons will be suspended for an additional three 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 Committees 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 10 days) by building principal.
2. Recommendations by a building principal for Alternative placement for disciplinary, educational, safety or attendance 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 Student Handbook.
4. Other reason deemed advisable by a building principal.
5. Appeal of a short-term suspension of five to ten days. Appeals of less than five days may be appealed only to the building principal.

Composition of Discipline Review Committees:

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 office 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 guardian who acknowledges receipt and a copy is 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 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.

Guidance for Discipline Review Committee:

The Principal should ensure that all behavior intervention documentation is submitted to the presiding chair of the Discipline Review Committee before a student is suspended for 10 days, except in the case of a violation of a weapons or drugs policy, in which case the suspension would begin immediately. In this case, documentation should be submitted to the committee with the request for a hearing within two (2) school days after the suspension begins. **Principals** should email the request for a discipline review committee hearing to the following district staff within 24 hours or 1 school day of the discipline incident in which the principal is requesting a discipline review: 1) Presiding Officer 2) Recording Secretary 3) Director of Schools.

Principals should send information to the Presiding Officer within two (2) school days after the request for a hearing (by emailing or sending by interoffice mail). The information that should be sent to the Presiding officer includes: discipline paperwork, reports and evidence regarding the incident and any behavior intervention documentation provided to the student. This allows the team time to review all information needed as they prepare for the discipline review committee.

Every effort should be made by the **Presiding Officer** to arrange the hearing within three (3) school days after the incident. The Presiding Officer should document in the student information system all attempts to reach guardians to set up the discipline review hearing. The goal is to convene the hearing quickly, so the student either returns to a school setting or the family knows the outcome of the hearing as soon as possible.

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. Aggravated 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 like 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, 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. Simple 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.

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 sale, 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.

F. 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, i-pods, 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 on the first offense, \$10; after 7 calendar days for the second offense, \$20; and, 30 days or at the end of the semester for the third offense. If a student refuses to give a staff member his or her phone, it is automatic insubordination; Level 3 infraction. ***CTS provides technology devices that is needed for students to complete all necessary classwork, therefore cell phones are not needed.

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 state-wide subject area or grade level testing must be reported to the Mississippi Department of Education **may result in the student's test being invalidated**. *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 and Social media policy for further guidance on this topic.

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 are not to 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.

At Choctaw Central High School, students will be required to park in front of the main building. Absolutely no parking by students will be allowed behind the music building, cafeteria, Instructional Services Complex, or gym. 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.

G. 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 and students enrolled in the dormitory program receive a snack and evening meal. Only one Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) meal application per household is needed per year and is required to complete the student enrollment requirements 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. MDE provides full meal reimbursement for students classified as free and partial meal reimbursement for students classified as reduced and paid. The Tribe provides the remainder of the payment for students classified as reduced and paid, so every student in the Choctaw Tribal School 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 systems 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, 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 school-wide Student Advocacy Plan to provide mentoring/support to all students

Library

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 students will visit the library according to schedules and arrangements at their local schools. 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 tribal school system. 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.
3. A fine of 5¢ per day will be charged for overdue books.

Lockers Middle School

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 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. 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 a minimum of five hours per week while on ISEP approved home-bound 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. 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 allow the parent to appeal the decision as outlined in the due process procedures of this handbook.

During a student's placement in the Alternative Program, he or she is suspended from participation in all extra- curricular 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 mandatory 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.

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 recommendation as to the placement days recommended for 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. **Students will have the opportunity to have each day served in the alternative school count for 2 days from the designated placement days based on good behavior, good performance in classwork and participation in school service activities. On the contrary, students that do not follow rules or have poor behavior may not get credit for a day causing that day not to count or may only have that single day to count.**

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. 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 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, 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.

H. HEALTH SERVICES

Nutrition

Cafeteria managers will provide information on diet and nutrition to all students in the Choctaw Tribal Schools.

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 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 School is 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.).

- Kindergarten students will 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 2006 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 (2004 Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard 20, Appendix A).
- Implement the 2006 Mississippi Comprehensive Health Framework for grades 9-12 (2004 Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard 20, Appendix A).

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. 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 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 classes 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. Each student in grades 5-12 will receive at least one

(1) hour of health education pertaining to pregnancy prevention and sexually transmitted diseases (STD's), including, but not limited to, HIV/AIDS. 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 indicate so on the student enrollment forms.

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 the elementary 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 absences may be counted as "excused;" all other days absent for this cause are "unexcused."
- If a student's head lice problem cannot be solved through the above steps, the community health center nurse will be notified. If the problem continues, 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.

I. 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 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 intervention; suspension; 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.

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. 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" for incomplete work.

All Athletes

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 interscholastic 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 limited from participating in and attending activities based on their behavior and actions.

The Tribal School system will not participate in activities that require any student to miss more than (20) twenty class periods or have more than (5) five 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. A pregnant student will be ineligible to participate in a MHSAA sponsored activity or its equivalent due to health and safety concerns. Following the pregnancy and with appropriate medical documentation the student may resume participation in MHSAA sponsored activities or their equivalent. Students must meet the following criteria established by the Mississippi High School Activities Association (MHSAA):

7th and 8th Grade Athletics

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 4 core courses (English, math, science and social studies). The average of these 4 core courses must be a "C" or above. For spring semester eligibility, the average of the 4 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 four core courses of math, science, English, and social studies the previous year in order to be eligible to participate during the present year.

Middle School Football

Any 7th or 8th grade student who wishes to play middle school football must be enrolled at Choctaw Central Middle School. A parent of students from outlying schools who intend to play football should work with the Registrar's office to request an out of boundary waiver. After football season is completed, students may choose to return to their home school or remain at Choctaw Central Middle School. It is strongly recommended that players enroll in the dormitory program during season.

Choctaw Central High School Athletics

1. Students are required to pass six 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 a 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 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

Choctaw Central Middle School and High School

- a. One committee will be appointed by the Principals to coordinate all activities for the Middle School/High School 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.
- b. 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.
- c. 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.
- d. It is each contestant's responsibility to obtain dress, shirt, accessories, and other items.

- e. 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.

Who can be a homecoming maid?

- Candidates 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.

- Gender Line

- Pregnancy Line

The election process will begin with registering interest, and there will be no nominations. After every signee has been approved of meeting the standard criteria, names will be placed onto a ballot. Any female will have the opportunity to register if interested. Each class will vote for his/her own grade and grade representative. What will the court consist of?

1. Each grade will have a representative (Grades 9-11); (Seniors will have 3 representatives)

2. 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

3. Homecoming Queen will be announced 2 weeks prior to the ceremony

4. Escorts must be submitted and approved prior to homecoming; Non-student escorts may be subject to a background check

5. Votes are tabulated electronically

6. Only students in grade 9-12 will be permitted to participate in Homecoming Ceremony activities

CDC guidelines will determine what protocols will be put into practice in the case of, but limited to, infectious diseases such as Flu or COVID-19. The following rules regarding infectious and communicable diseases will be in effect during any state of public health emergency. CTS will follow the MBCI Human Resources Policy.

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:

2023 – Tucker Elementary

2024 – Pearl River Elementary

2025 – Bogue Chitto Elementary

2026 – Conehatta 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.

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, students must have good attendance and receive prior approval to miss school for attending NAYO events.

Fund-Raising

All fund-raising 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-fund raising activities sponsored by the school or school-related student/parent organizations may be conducted on school property. All fund-raising 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 fund-raising 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, a *Choctaw Tribal Schools – Application to Establish Class and Club Account* must be completed and filed with the school principal. The application requires that a statement of purpose of the organization be completed, a proposed staff sponsor(s) named, and fundraising information listed. Once the completed application has been received it 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 is then 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 in the Principal's office.

Jr. Beta Club Eligibility (CHOCTAW CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL)

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

- Students must have a grade of 86 or higher in each subject
- New inductees must have a first nine-weeks average of 86 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 or higher in each subject.
- If a returning member has a first nine weeks grade below 86, 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.
- Behavior:
 - Beta members shall lose membership to the club for either of the following:
 - Beta members shall have no more than 2 office referrals per year
 - Beta members shall have no suspensions

Students who are members in good standing are eligible to attend the annual Jr. Beta State Convention. Students who place first, second, or third in the State Convention competitions are eligible to attend the National Jr. 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 need to be reviewed by Finance.

School Visitors

SCHOOL SAFETY 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. It is understood that intended 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. Volunteer Service Applications may be required for visitors who work with student groups and/or activities. Volunteers would be subject to a background investigation. 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.

A "Visitor" is defined as any person on Tribal School 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 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 Tribal School System employee. Visitors are only allowed to use single occupant restrooms.

A "Volunteer" is defined as any person on Tribal School 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 check list 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 the Choctaw Tribal School web site 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 taking into account that the school's ability to take action based only on an anonymous report, may be limited. Reports should be made promptly but no later than five calendar (5) 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

CTS purchased STOPIT, which is an anonymous reporting App/Website that anyone can report any type of activity such as violence, bullying, threats, illegal activity, cyberbullying, 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 WE TIPS that can be found on the MBCI homepage. STOPIT can be accessed on school devices during the school day, so please encourage students to please report any inappropriate activity.

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. CTS is committed to protecting personally identifiable information and will not publish names of students on any internet-based platform.

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. Throughout the year, there will be occasional and unannounced inspections by tribal law enforcement's drug detection dog. Campus security officers will assist the school principal in completion of all safety inspections, 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 the CTS handbook and may be prosecuted under Tribal law.

Notice of the Presence of Asbestos Containing Material (ACM)

On 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) All suspected cases of child abuse/neglect shall be reported to the principal, assistant principal or guidance counselor. The assistant principal or counselor shall report immediately to the principal.
- (b) An appropriate administrative official, counselor or school nurse shall make immediate notification, by telephone, to the Tribe's Department of Public Safety to initiate the reporting protocol and to receive further instruction from law enforcement. In the event that law enforcement instructs the school to contact the Tribe's 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. Law enforcement and/or CFS personnel will conduct an in-school conference with any child who has been reported for suspected abuse/neglect.
- (c) Immediately after the response from law enforcement and/or CFS, the person(s) responsible for receiving the initial information concerning the alleged abuse/neglect shall complete an *Indian Child Protection Referral* form. (See the forms section of the CTS Staff Handbook.)
- (d) The ICPR form shall be routed according to the instructions on the form and in accordance with the mandatory reporter training that has been provided by the Attorney General's office. The form must be submitted less than 24 hours after the initial report of the incident. No forms shall be withheld due to the absence of any administrative school personnel, nor shall any administrative personnel withhold the submission of any form to the appropriate reporting agencies.
- (e) Delivery of the ICPR form shall be preferably made by in-person delivery to the reporting agencies. The ICPR form should be maintained in a confidential envelope at all times until delivered.
- (f) School personnel are prohibited from discussing any incidents of reported abuse/neglect except with those designated administrative personnel, law enforcement, CFS or the Attorney General's office.

The law provides that the identity of any person making a report shall not be disclosed without the consent of the person making the report.

If you have information about Theft, Child Abuse, 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.

J. EMERGENCY PLANS

Emergency Plans & 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 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 as to 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

Tornado or severe weather (notification 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, the pupils 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

Fire, explosion, and bomb threat: 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.

K. 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 **Assistant Director of Schools**, (3) the Tribal Chief.
- ✦ The student has the right to the following:
 - 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.
 - To produce, and have produced, witnesses on the student's behalf and to confront and examine all witnesses.
 - 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 district.

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 entitled "Grievance."

Student or parent/guardian complaints of discrimination may be filed according to the procedures described elsewhere in this handbook.

Family Educational Rights & Privacy

The Choctaw Tribal School System is in compliance with provisions granted under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy 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.

School – Home Compact

Because we believe that the education of every student must be a partnership between the school and the home, we today 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 student's and parent/guardian's signatures on the agreement form, 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

Parent and Community Members 'Right to Know' Notification

Staff members from all the 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 and 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 3rd – 8th

- State Assessment, Science Test: MS MAAP-Science Assessment Grades 5th and 8th
- 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 web-page, parent portal log-in
- 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 (CTS) 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 web-site at www.choctawtribalschools.com or stop by your local school for more information.

HOME SCHOOLING

If a parent chooses to not enroll their child in the CTS and plan to home school their child, the parent must fill out a Certificate of Home School Enrollment form with the School Attendance Office and the request must be approved by the Director of Schools. The form will consist of 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. **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 tribal school system.**

Certificate of Home School Enrollment

School Year: _____ Community: _____ Date of Birth: _____
Student Name: _____

911 Address: _____

Parent, Guardian: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email Address and Phone Contact _____

Type of Education Program

Home Instruction Home Instruction - Online Program
 Private School Private School - Online Program

Description of educational
program: _____

Signature of Parent, Guardian

Date

Signature of Director of Schools

Date

FORM A

Parent Note Excuse Form

Student's Legal Name: _____

Date of Absence(s): _____

Please excuse _____ for being absent on the days listed above. Follow the handbook on timelines for submitting absence excuses.

Please check the absence reason that applies & attach official excuse form (if required*):

| | |
|--|--|
| _____ Medical absence* | _____ Serious illness/Death in Immediate family* |
| _____ Parental excuse (with explanation) | _____ 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:** _____

Parent Note Excuse Form

Student's Legal Name: _____

Date of Absence(s): _____

Please excuse _____ for being absent on the days listed above. Follow the handbook on timelines for submitting absence excuses.

Please check the absence reason that applies & attach official excuse form (if required*):

| | |
|--|--|
| _____ Medical absence* | _____ Serious illness/Death in Immediate family* |
| _____ Parental excuse (with explanation) | _____ 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:** _____

I have received, read and agree to abide by the student handbook for the school year **2023 - 2024.**

If you need answers to questions about the information contained in this handbook, please contact the school principal.

--- Please sign and return this page to the school principal. ---

Parent or Guardian (Signature) Date

Parent or Guardian (Printed please)

Student's Name (Printed & Signature) Grade

NOTES:

