

RECRUITMENT AND HIRING OF PERSONNEL

SECTION I: ALL PERSONNEL

The Board of Trustees of the Jackson Public School District is an equal opportunity employer. The Board shall not discriminate against any individual in the district's employment practices concerning compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, color, age, creed, national origin, religion, marital status, genetic information, disability, or handicap which does not impair an individual's ability to perform adequately in that individual's particular position or activity. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, a person with a disability is anyone who:

1. Has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities such as walking, seeing, speaking, sitting, thinking, breathing, learning, interacting with others, working, reading, standing, lifting, bending, concentrating, manual tasks, and caring for one's self;
2. Has a record of such impairment; or
3. Is regarded as having such impairment.

The Board shall continue to make opportunities for employment and promotion available to every individual, solely based on qualifications and without regard to race, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, color, age, creed, national origin, religion, disability, or marital status.

This Board shall select all school district personnel in the manner provided by law and provide for such employee fringe benefit programs including accident reimbursement plans, as may be deemed necessary and appropriate by the Board.

Candidates for all positions shall submit an online application to the Jackson Public School District through the APPLY NOW ONLINE website, www.jackson.k12.ms.us. Recruitment for a specific vacancy shall not be undertaken until the need for the position and its qualifications have been established and proper authorization obtained.

Vacancy information will be posted in all district facilities and will be available in the Office of Human Resources. Where feasible, vacancies will be posted on the Internet.

All applications of candidates who have submitted a letter of interest by the announced deadline will be reviewed. It shall be the policy of the Jackson Public School District to actively recruit and select for employment the best-qualified applicant for each position without regard to race, sex, color, creed, national origin, age, or religion.

All successful candidates must undergo a background investigation for criminal history. The school district reserves the right to refuse to hire any candidate or to dismiss any employee who has a criminal history, refuses to consent to a criminal background check, misrepresents material information, or who omits information on the employment application form. Successful candidates for safety-sensitive positions will also be required to undergo drug screening before hire. The background procedure is described in greater detail in Section II.

All personnel selected for employment must be recommended by the superintendent and approved by the Board of trustees of the Jackson Public School District.

The superintendent shall have the authority to fulfill vacancies by temporarily employing licensed and non-licensed employees without the Board of Trustees' prior approval. The superintendent must notify the Board of such employment. Within thirty (30) days of such employment, the Board must either ratify or disapprove the employment at the next regular meeting of the Board. The temporary employment shall automatically terminate at the end of the business day on the thirtieth (30th) day of employment if the Board fails to ratify or disapprove the employment within thirty (30) days.

The temporary employee may be paid on the same salary schedule as the district's other employees until the Board acts. If the Board disapproves of such employment, the employer shall immediately terminate and no further compensation, notice, nor other employments rights shall be had. The district is required to pay the terminated employee his salary and fringe benefits for days worked.

In carrying out these duties, the Superintendent will ensure that the position being filled has been budgeted for; the prospective employee has completed the employment background screening with no disqualifying results except for the child abuse registry check results which may be obtained once the employee has been hired; and if required, the prospective employee has submitted the appropriate licensures and/or certifications.

The superintendent will ensure that all employee manuals and handbooks, if any, are compliant with state and federal law. All employees are to be advised of the revisions of the handbooks or manuals and any implications for existing personnel.

SECTION II: EMPLOYMENT BACKGROUND SCREENING

The Board of Trustees is committed to the use of all reasonable means to ensure the safety of its students and employees. The employment background screening process is designed to make the school environment safe and to screen out those persons who could be harmful to students or staff. The employment background screening process in the Jackson Public School District will include:

- Reference checks made with the applicant's most recent supervisors.
- A child abuse check with the child abuse registry may be obtained once the employee has been hired.
- Fingerprinting with checks made at the state level and the national criminal history level. In some instances, a criminal records background check for felony convictions will be utilized.

Beginning July 1, 2000, current criminal records background checks and current child abuse registry checks must be obtained and remain on file for any new hires applying for employment as a certified or classified employee including substitute employees and those former employees who have had a break in service with the school district. To determine the applicant's suitability for employment, the applicant shall be fingerprinted and the Department of Public Safety will forward those fingerprints to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The applicant shall pay the fee for such fingerprinting and criminal history record check, not to exceed fifty dollars (\$50.00).

Under no circumstances shall the superintendent, School Board member, or any individual other than the subject of the criminal history record checks disseminate information received through such checks except insofar as required to fulfill the purposes of the employment background screening policy.

If the background screening process discloses a felony conviction, guilty plea, or plea of nolo contendere to a felony of possession or sale of drugs, murder, manslaughter, armed robbery, rape, sexual battery, or sex offense listed in Miss. Code Ann. Section 45-31-3(I), child abuse, arson, grand larceny, burglary, the gratification of lust or aggravated assault which has not been reversed on appeal or for which a pardon has

not been granted, the new hire shall not be eligible to be employed in the district. Any employment contract or notification letter for a new hire executed by the superintendent of the Jackson Public School District shall be voidable if the new hire receives a disqualifying criminal record check.

The Board of Trustees or its designee may, in its discretion, allow any applicant aggrieved by the employment decision under this policy to appear before the Board, or before a hearing officer designated for such purpose, to show mitigating circumstances which may exist and which may allow the new hire to be employed in the district. The Board or its designee may grant waivers for such mitigating circumstances, which shall include, but not be limited to: (a) age at which the crime was committed, (b) circumstances surrounding the crime; (c) length of time since the conviction and criminal history since the conviction; (d) work history; (e) current employment and character references; and (f) other evidence demonstrating the ability of the person to perform the employment responsibilities competently and that the person does not pose a threat to the health or safety of the children in the school district.

SECTION III: CERTIFIED STAFF

The nominee for a contracted position shall hold an appropriate, valid, Mississippi certificate for the position for which they are nominated, and shall be a graduate of an accredited institution of higher learning and shall have a Bachelor's degree. Nominees for certain vocational positions may not be required to be a graduate of an accredited institution of higher learning or have a Bachelor's degree, provided their work experience qualifies them for proper certification by the State Department of Education.

This school district is committed to high levels of academic achievement for all students and thus seeks to employ highly qualified teachers in elementary, middle, and high schools. A highly qualified teacher shall execute a written contract with the school district. The certificate shall be valid at the time of execution of the contract. If the certificate expires during the life of such contract and is not renewed, the contract shall be null and void until the certification is renewed.

Any employee allowing a certificate to expire must have it reinstated before the issuance of the contract. An expired certificate is a ground for dismissal.

SECTION IV: CLASSIFIED STAFF

Classified employees do not have an employment contract with the Jackson Public School District. Non-certified positions are "at-will" positions.

SOURCE: Mississippi School Boards Association

LEGAL REF.: Miss. Code Ann. §§ 37-9-17 and 37-7-301;
Public Law 107-110;
Mississippi Public School Accountability Standard 1

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