

VERIBEST
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

HOME OF THE



FALCONS

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK
2008-2009

VERIBEST ISD EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

2008 – 2009

Mission Statement

The Veribest Independent School District, as a safe and enjoyable center of learning, will continue to provide for each child an education to reach his/her full potential through the interactive involvement of students, parents, staff and community members. A positive, innovative learning environment develops self-worth, self-discipline, and Godliness, which motivate our students to become productive citizens in an ever-changing society.

IN SUPPORT OF THIS MISSION, WE ARE COMMITTED TO:

1. An integrated curriculum that utilizes advanced technology and both innovative and proven educational techniques.
2. A climate characterized by intrinsic motivation for high expectations, academic excellence, mutual and self-respect, caring and personal support.
3. Strong parental and community support.
4. Assessment and accountability for instruction and the use of resources.
5. Pertinent staff development based on needs of all education staff.
6. Display of professionalism at all times towards students, colleagues, parents and community members.

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INTRODUCTION

The Veribest ISD Employee Handbook is provided to assist in the promotion of an efficient organizational system. The handbook is not all-inclusive. Additions or changes may be made during the year should it become necessary. Administrative policies are included in the Employee Handbook.

The policies of the handbook are consistent with those set forth by the Veribest ISD Board of Trustees, the Texas Education Agency and the State Board of Education. For further clarifications of these policies, one may consult the Veribest ISD Board Policies Manual. Copies are located in the offices of the Principal and Superintendent.

Veribest ISD team members are the foundation of our school. Each team member is vital to the successes we achieve. Teamwork divides the tasks and doubles the success of any effort. By working together, good work does indeed become great work. “Teamwork is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results”.

CODE OF ETHICS AND STANDARD PRACTICES

The educator should strive to create an atmosphere that will nurture to fulfillment the potential of each student.

The educator is responsible for standard practices, ethical and moral conduct toward students, professional colleagues, parents and the community.

The code is intended to govern the profession and interpretations of the Code shall be determined by the Professional Practice's Commission.

The educator who conducts his affairs with conscientious concern will exemplify the highest standards of professional commitment.

PRINCIPLE I: Professional Ethical Conduct

The educator should endeavor to maintain dignity of the profession by respecting and obeying the law, demonstrating personal integrity, and exemplifying honesty.

1. The educator shall not intentionally misrepresent official policies of this school district or educational organization and shall clearly distinguish those views from his personal attitudes and opinions.
2. The educator shall honestly account for all funds committed to his charge and shall conduct his financial business with integrity.
3. The educator shall not use institutional or professional privileges for personal or partisan advantage.

PRINCIPLE II: Professional Practices and Performance

The educator, after qualifying in a manner established by law or regulation, shall assume responsibility for professional performance and shall continually strive to demonstrate competence.

1. The educator shall apply for, accept, offer, or assign a position or responsibility, on the basis of professional qualifications and shall adhere to the terms of a contract or appointment.
2. The educator shall possess mental health, physical stamina, and social prudence necessary to perform the duties of his professional assignment.
3. The educator shall organize instruction that seeks to accomplish objectives related to learning.
4. The educator shall continue professional growth.
5. The educator shall comply with written local Board policies, Texas Education Agency regulations, and applicable state laws.

PRINCIPLE III: Ethical Conduct Toward Professional Colleagues

The educator, in exemplifying ethical relations with colleagues, shall accord just and equitable treatment to all members of the profession.

1. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning colleagues unless disclosure serves professional purposes by law.
2. The educator shall not willfully make false statements about a colleague of the school system.
3. The educator shall adhere to written School Board policies and legal statutes regarding dismissal.

PRINCIPLE IV: Ethical Conduct Toward Students

The educator, in accepting a position of public trust, should measure success by the progress of each student toward realization of his potential as an effective citizen.

1. The educator shall deal considerately and justly with each student and shall seek to resolve problems including discipline according to law and School Board policy.
2. The educator shall not intentionally expose the student to disparagement.
3. The educator shall not reveal confidential information concerning students unless disclosure serves professional purpose or it is required by law.
4. The educator shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions detrimental to learning, or health, or safety.
5. The educator shall endeavor to present facts without distortion.

PRINCIPLE V: Ethical Conduct Toward Parents, Colleagues and Community

The educator, in fulfilling citizenship responsibilities in the community, should cooperate with parents and others to improve the public schools of the community.

1. The educator shall not interfere with a colleague's exercise of political and citizenship rights and responsibilities.
2. The educator shall make reasonable efforts to communicate information to parents in the interest of the student.
3. The educator shall endeavor to understand community cultures and relate the home environment of the students to the school.
4. The educator shall manifest a positive role in school public relations.

EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

District Hiring Procedures

Notice of all vacancies shall be advertised by appropriate means consistent with law. Current District employees shall be permitted to apply for a vacancy.

All applicants for employment shall complete the application furnished by the District. Information contained in applications for contract positions shall be verified before a contract is offered.

Any person who desires to teach in the District who is an educational aide, teacher trainee, or non-degreed teacher, who is assigned to a position classified under the Texas Public Education Compensation Plan, shall be certified according to the certification requirements or standards adopted by the State Board. (Policy DBA)

All teachers who are employed with emergency permits must satisfy TEA requirements for proper certification for the position in which they are employed within the time allowed by TEA. (Policy DBA – Local)

The Board has established the following objective criteria for decisions regarding the hiring, dismissal, reassignment, promotion, and demotion of District personnel:

1. proper certification for grade level, subject or assignment
2. evaluations
3. experience in district
4. the needs of the District
5. recommendations and references
6. suitability for the position and professional competence
7. academic or technical preparation, supported by transcripts

These criteria are not ranked/ordered and may be considered in part or whole in making decisions. (Policy DBA – Local)

Equal Opportunity Employment

With certain exceptions stated in the Board Policy Manual, *Policy DAA*, the District shall adhere to a policy of equal employment opportunities for all employees. The District shall not, because of an individual's race, color, handicap, religion, sex, national origin, or age, fail or refuse to hire or discharge any individual with respect to compensation or terms, against an individual, conditions or privileges of employment. The District shall not limit, segregate, or classify employees or applications for employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect the individual's status as an employee.

The District shall not discriminate on the basis of sex in its employment practices.

The District's designated Handicap Coordinator and Title IX Coordinator shall be Clint Askins, Elementary Principal of Veribest Independent School District. (*Policy DAA and DAA – Local*)

District Orientation Procedures

At the beginning of each school year, a portion of the teacher workday will be set aside for orientation. During this meeting, the principal and/or superintendent will go over the employee handbook or changes in the handbook, the student handbook or changes, the changes in the discipline management plan, changes in the Professional Development and Appraisal System, and any other changes or improvements in organization or administration of the Veribest ISD that will make for an efficient program.

DEFINITION OF EMPLOYEE STATUS

Professional Employee:

All professional employees shall be graduates of colleges or universities that are approved by TEA for teacher education programs. This includes fully certified teachers, administrators, counselors, librarians, and other certifications recognized by TEA.

Paraprofessional and Auxiliary Personnel:

An example of a paraprofessional is an educational aide, teacher aide or secretary. Auxiliary personnel shall include, by not limited to, bus drivers, lunchroom, custodial and maintenance personnel. (*Policy DBA*)

Paraprofessional and auxiliary personnel shall serve at will, are not employed for any specific length of time, and have no property right to their employment. No employee other than the superintendent has any authority to make oral representation or agreements for employment for any specific length of time, or to make any other agreement for representation regarding employment.

Probationary Contract

Each of the following persons shall be employed under a probationary contract when the District employs the person for the first time or if the District has not employed the person for two consecutive years:

- classroom teacher
- counselor
- other full time professional employee who is required to hold a certification issued under *Education Code Chapter 21, sub-chapter B*.

A probationary contract may not be for a certain term exceeding one school year.

A probationary contract may be renewed for two additional one-year periods, for a maximum permissible probationary contract period of three school years, except that the probationary period may not exceed one year for a person who has been employed as a teacher in public education for at least five years of the eight years preceding employment by the District.

A probationary contract period may be extended beyond the third consecutive year of employment if, during the third year of the probationary period, the Board determines that it is doubtful whether a continuing contract or a term contract should be given. If the Board makes such a determination, the District may make a probationary contract for a term ending with the fourth consecutive school year of the teacher's employment with the District, at which time the District shall:

- terminate the employment of the teacher and/or
- employ the teacher under a contract as provided by District policy

The Board of Trustees of the school district may terminate the employment of a teacher employed under a probationary contract at the end of the contract period if, in the Board's judgment, the best interests of the District will be served by terminating the employment. The Board of Trustees must give notice of its intention to terminate the employment to the teacher no later than the 45th day before the last day of instruction required under the contract. The Board's decision is final and may not be appealed.

If the Board of Trustees fails to give notice of its intention to terminate the teacher's employment within the time prescribed, the Board must employ the probationary teacher in the same capacity under:

- a probationary contract for the following school year, if the teacher has been employed by the district under a probationary contract for less than three consecutive school years, or
- a term contract, according to District policy, if the teacher has been employed by the District under a probationary contract

During the probation period, employees are not subject to the provisions of the Term Contract Non-Renewal Act, and contracts shall not be renewed in accordance with the District's policy (*DOAD*) relating to non-renewal of probationary period. (*Policy DFAB*)

Term Contracts

All professional employees shall be employed under a term contract, which states a specific length – usually ten, eleven or twelve months – for the contract. A contract of employment with the District creates a property interest in the position only for the period of time stated in the contract. Such a contract creates no property interest of any kind beyond the period of time stated in the contract.

Before a teacher may be employed under a term contract, the teacher must be employed under a probationary contract for the period provided by policy.

Evaluation

The District shall have an evaluation system that provides periodic written evaluation of all full time certified professional employees at annual or bi-annual intervals.

Written, annual or bi-annual appraisals of non-teaching personnel classified in the Texas Education Code shall be detailed by characteristic and shall provide for separate ratings per category. (*Policy DNA*)

Grievances and Complaints

Employees may present complaints alleging any act in violation of a constitutional, statutory, or common law right, or a rule or policy adopted by the State Board of Education or the local School Board. Employees with such complaints should follow local Board policy (*DGBA/Local*). The first level of presenting a complaint or grievance is with the principal or immediate supervisor.

EMPLOYEE LEAVE POLICIES

Holidays

At the beginning of each school year, employees will be given a school calendar that will list the holidays for that school year. Normally, teachers and staff members will be off the following days: Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day and Spring Break. Consult the calendar for the current year for these holidays. Auxiliary personnel will be off Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, (and the Friday after Thanksgiving), Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Day and July 4th. Maintenance and custodial staff will be required to work one week of Christmas vacation and four days during spring break. Two weeks of summer vacation will be offered and scheduled with the superintendent.

State Personal Leave and Local Sick Leave

A state minimum personal leave program consisting of five days per year of personal leave with no limit on accumulation and transferable among districts shall be provided for District employees. School districts may provide additional personal leave beyond this minimum. The Board of Trustees of a school district may adopt a policy governing an employee's personal leave.

For the purpose of state sick leave accrued before May 30, 1995, and local sick leave, the term "immediate family" shall include: foster child, a son or daughter-in-law, a step child, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands "in loco parents", parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, or other individual who stands "in loco parents" to the employee, sibling, stepsibling, sibling-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, or any person who may be residing in the employee's household at the time of illness or death.

Under the authority of *Education Code 22.003* and to preserve the employee's leave entitlement while minimizing disruption to the instructional program, the Board requires that employees differentiate between uses of personal leave as:

- State Personal
- State Sick
- Local

Personal days cannot be taken:

- the day before or after a school holiday to extend school holidays
- days scheduled for end-of-semester exams
- days scheduled for TAKS tests
- professional or staff development days

District employees shall earn state personal leave, up to the statutory maximum of five days annually, at the rate of one-half workday for each 18 workdays of employment.

Personal leave and sick leave shall be recorded in whole day or half days.

Personal leave and local sick leave for the current year shall be available for use at the beginning of the school year. When an employee who has used more leave than he/she has accumulated ceases to be employed by the District, the cost of unearned leave days shall be deducted from the employee's final paycheck.

An employee absent for personal illness for more than five consecutive workdays shall submit a doctor's certification of illness and of the employee's fitness to return to work.

All employees shall earn an additional 5 equivalent workdays of local sick leave per school year, concurrently with state personal leave. Local sick leave shall be cumulative. After 10 days of local leave accumulation, the District will buy back all local days above the ten days at a rate of \$50.00 per day.

An employee shall be granted leave with pay and without loss of accumulated leave for jury duty. The employee shall be required to present documentation of the service and shall be allowed to retain any compensation for this service.

Any days of absence in excess of the days permitted by the state and local leave shall result in a deduction of the daily rate.

Employees shall be permitted to use any state and local personal leave and other leave benefits to which they are entitled under this policy while they are recovering from a job related injury and receiving worker's compensation benefits.

Personal leave for instructional staff with contracts more than 187 days of duty may not use accumulated State days of personal leave during summer to extend summer vacation unless a doctor's excuse is submitted and illness is verified.

Non-Instructional Personnel Personal Leave

Non-instructional personnel are district employees and are entitled to five (5) State personal leave days and five (5) local leave days for a total of ten (10) days. Non-instructional staff may not use accumulated days during the summer months (when school is not in session) for vacation or personal reasons unless permission is granted from the Superintendent or his/her designee. Maintenance and custodial staff will receive two weeks vacation during the summer but will not be allowed to use personal leave unless a doctor's excuse is given and sickness is verified. [DEC – Local]

Pregnancy

Disabilities caused or contributed to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, for all job related purposes, shall be treated the same as disabilities caused or contributed to be other medical conditions, under any health or disability insurance or sick leave plan available in connection with employment.

Absence from Duty Reports

All employees must complete an absence from duty report immediately on return to work. The form must be secured from the office secretary and must be signed by the teacher and principal. The form must include reason for absence. Please indicate if the absence is personal illness, personal leave or school related. If the absence is school related, indicate the name of the workshop, conference or meeting. School related absences must be approved in advance by the principal.

Judging of Contests

Employees who judge UIL or other contests that takes them away from their duties with Veribest ISD will be charged with a personal day for the days missed. Policy *DEC (Local)* will then apply. An exception will be granted by the principal only if the judging of the contests involves an agreement with other schools within the District of which Veribest School is a member. (Elementary and Junior High Schools are often divided into zones; if the District agrees to release teachers from one zone or judge at another zone, then an exception is granted.)

PAY PROCEDURE

Pay Day

Professional and paraprofessional employees shall be paid on the 25th of each month unless the 25th falls on a weekend, in which case payment will be on the Friday before. The Board shall pay the Employee in installments of an annual salary according to the salary schedule adopted by the Board, but in no event less than the State minimum salary. Substitute teachers will be paid monthly.

Deductions

The District shall make the following periodic deductions from the salaries of its employees: income tax, teacher retirement, assignments, insurance, deferred compensation, child support payments, Medicare tax, additional voluntary deductions and excess leave (*Policy CFEA*).

EMPLOYEE EXPECTATIONS OF THE DISTRICT

Employee Benefits:

Group health insurance shall be available to all employees of the District who meet the qualifications of the company or companies the District selects to serve our employees. The District will pay \$150 monthly toward the premium of every employee on TRS health insurance program.

DISTRICT EXPECTATIONS OF EMPLOYEES

All District professional and paraprofessional employees are expected to have proper certifications to which they are assigned to teach or work.

Advance Notification of Lateness or Absence

Employees are expected to notify their immediate supervisor when they are going to be tardy or absent from work. The supervisor will tell you how much notice is required. It is difficult to get substitutes on a spur-of-the-moment notice.

Dress

District employees shall dress in a clean, neat, professional manner appropriate to their assignments in the District.

Drug-Free School Requirements

The District prohibits the unlawful distribution, possession, or use of illicit drugs and alcohol on school premises or as part of any District activity.

Employees who violate this prohibition shall be subject to disciplinary sanctions. Such sanctions may include referral to drug and alcohol counseling or rehabilitation programs or employee assistance programs, termination from employment with the District, and referral to appropriate law enforcement officials for prosecution. Information on available rehabilitation or employee assistance programs shall be posted throughout the workplace.

Compliance with these requirements and prohibitions is mandatory and is a condition of employment. This notice complies with notice requirements imposed by Federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989 (*20 U.S.C 322 and 34 CFR 86.201*).

The District shall conduct testing, in accordance with federal regulations, of commercial motor vehicle operators for use of alcohol or a controlled substance that violates law or federal regulation. 49 U.S.C. 2717; 49 CFR Part 3, 82.

These testing requirements apply to every employee of the District who operates a commercial vehicle and is subject to commercial driver's license requirements. 49 CFR 382.105

Required testing includes pre-employment, post-accident, random, reasonable suspicion, and follow-up testing. No driver shall refuse to submit to a post-accident alcohol or controlled substance test, a random alcohol or controlled substance test, a reasonable suspicion alcohol or controlled substance test, or a follow-up alcohol or controlled

substance test. The District shall not permit a driver who refuses to submit to such test to perform or continue to perform safety-sensitive functions. 49 CFR 382.211, 382.301

Employee Records

Employee personnel folders will be maintained in the Superintendent's office. Access to these records can only be made during regular work hours. An employee may not remove his records from the file cabinet without prior approval of the Superintendent. Only the Superintendent's secretary may make copies of the items in these files.

The employee is responsible for keeping his/her records current.

Failure to supply current information for updating your personnel file could result in a delay in a paycheck. All of the following information must be on file in the Superintendent's office before any paychecks are issued.

- Teaching certificate(s)
- official college transcript of all college credit
- service record or past teaching experience
- signed contract with the District
- an oath of office

A criminal record check will be conducted on all employees of the District.

Employee Standards of Conduct

Employees should conduct themselves as professional at all times. All District personnel shall recognize and respect the rights of students, as established by local, state, and federal law.

All District employees will follow the standards of conduct as prescribed in policy DH (local). In addition, all professional employees shall follow the "Code of Ethics and Standard Practice for Teacher Educators".

Care of Room and Buildings

Classrooms and buildings should be kept clean and well organized. The custodial staff is responsible for daily cleaning and general maintenance. If a room or area is in need of repair, please submit a repair or work request to the principal who will then turn it in to the superintendent, if necessary. Forms may be obtained in the principal's office.

Walls and doors are easily damaged by tape and adhesives used to display materials. The tape and adhesives damage the varnish and stain on classroom doors and cannot be removed without refinishing the doors. All outside doors to buildings should be kept closed for energy conservation. Please turn off lights and adjust air conditioner/heater when you leave the room for the day. This will also conserve energy.

Outside Employment

No employee shall accept other employment or compensation that could create a conflict of interest or interfere with his duties with Veribest ISD.

Personal Hygiene

Employees of Veribest ISD shall practice appropriate personal hygiene that is conducive to a pleasant learning and working environment.

Safety Rules

The safety of our employees and students is utmost in the desires of Veribest ISD. Employees are expected to follow safety rules in all activities. Should you notice something that would create a safety hazard, notify your immediate supervisor.

School Access After Hours

Employees may work after hours if they choose. The custodians have been advised to lock the doors at 4:00 pm. No student should be in the building after school hours unless a school employee is present. A school employee must be present when students are in the gymnasium after school hours. All after-school events shall be scheduled on the official school calendar in the offices of the superintendent and principal.

Security Rules

Keys loaned to employees shall not be loaned to any other person or copies made without permission of the Superintendent. Do not give your keys to anyone not employed by the District. Keys may not be given to students or student workers under any circumstances. All keys will be issued through the Superintendent's office.

Smoking Rules

Penal Code 48.01 prohibits the use of tobacco on school property during the school day as well as extra-curricular activities.

Tobacco, Alcohol and Drug Use

District employees may not use tobacco products while at school, on school property during the school day or at school sponsored activities. Employees who use or are under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, as defined by the Texas Controlled Substance Act, during work hours may be dismissed in accordance with Board policy. (DH – Local)

Visitor Rules

Salesmen or other vendors must report to the Principal's office before visiting the elementary or secondary campus. No solicitation other than for school business is allowed during work hours. All visitors must sign in at the Principal's office upon entering the building.

Cell Phone Use

Employees that have school cell phones issued to them will be expected to keep cell phone use to a minimum. Time used beyond free minutes will be paid by the employee. School cell phone use is for school business. Personal calls can be charged to the employee.

DISTRICT COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

Forms of Communication

The form of communication used will depend upon the purpose of and the intended audience for the communication. Communication to students and teachers may be placed on bulletin boards. Regular or special meetings may be called to communicate or disseminate information to all employees. Phone calls, letters, email, mid-six weeks progress reports and six week report cards will be used to communicate with parents.

Grievance Policy

Any person having a complaint or grievance against an employee, administrative personnel, rules or Board policy should follow the "chain of command" as follows:

1. Principal
2. Superintendent
3. School Board

Parents having complaints about a teacher should first address the complaint to the teacher. If the grievance is not resolved, then parents should follow the chain as described above.

For the Board policy and procedures on grievances and complaints, one should consult the Board Policy Manual located in the principal or superintendent's office. (For personnel, policy DGBA; for students, policy FNG)

General Procedures for Solving Problems at School

Take your concern to the person closest to the problem. No matter where the problem is, take your concern there first. Whether it's in the classroom, on the bus, or on the practice field, the quickest and easiest solution is usually found with the staff member most directly involved. The problem you or your child face may be the result of an oversight

or misunderstanding that can easily be corrected once it is brought to the attention of the staff member most directly involved. Give them a chance to solve the problem first. If the situation is not resolved, present your concern to the next level. The principal is responsible for supervision of staff within buildings. The principal is an example of the next level of personnel you should contact if the staff member closest to the problem hasn't been able to satisfactorily resolve the difficulty.

His ability to help will be improved if you share the steps you've taken with the staff member closest to the problem, or if you will openly share with them the reasons why you feel uncomfortable dealing directly with the person who is closest to the situation.

Supervisory personnel will rarely have ready access to information they need to be of immediate assistance and working through them will often require additional time. Talk with the Superintendent of schools. Sometime, all the best intentions can't solve a problem. When you've worked hard with those nearest to the problem and you've taken the problem to the next level, but still haven't achieved a satisfactory outcome, the Superintendent is the next place to go.

Keep in mind that the Superintendent's day starts off early and often ends late in the evening. Part of the Superintendent's job requires attendance at area-wide meetings outside of the District. As a consequence, a meeting with the Superintendent will probably require some advanced planning.

Contact your School Board members. School Board members are elected to represent the interest of all parents and District residents, and you should always feel free to tell them your point of view. School Board members do not, however, have direct authority in day-to-day operations. All authority is the result of official actions by a majority of the Board at meetings open to the public.

The Board's primary responsibility is to make policies that guide the school district. Some policy changes require substantial public input and consultation with the school district's attorney. These requirements often increase the time required for the Board to make a response.

So when should a Board member be contacted and what can they do? Contact a Board member:

- After other means to solve a problem have been tried
- When a policy is being enforced but you believe it results in bad consequences, when you believe a policy isn't being enforced, or
- When policies and procedures are not enforced fairly

A Board member may take one or all of the following actions:

- Informally discuss the issue with the Superintendent or other administrators to consider whether policies or rules should be changed
- Request that the Board review the specific policies that relate to the situation
- Propose new policies for the Board's consideration

Problems and misunderstandings will occur. The school district staff and administration will work to successfully solve problems, because when children experience problems at school, it causes difficulty not only for children, but also for parents and school staff.

Employee’s Career with the District

Salary Structure

The District currently pays full time classroom teachers the state mandated pay schedule.

Current State Pay Scale—Adopted by Legislature (1999) 2005-2006

| Step | Salary | Step | Salary |
|------|-------------|------|-------------|
| 0 | \$24,240.00 | 11 | \$34,640.00 |
| 1 | \$24,810.00 | 12 | \$35,490.00 |
| 2 | \$25,390.00 | 13 | \$36,280.00 |
| 3 | \$25,960.00 | 14 | \$37,050.00 |
| 4 | \$27,170.00 | 15 | \$37,760.00 |
| 5 | \$28,380.00 | 16 | \$38,440.00 |
| 6 | \$29,590.00 | 17 | \$39,080.00 |
| 7 | \$30,720.00 | 18 | \$39,260.00 |
| 8 | \$31,780.00 | 19 | \$40,260.00 |
| 9 | \$32,790.00 | 20+ | \$40,800.00 |
| 10 | \$33,730.00 | | |

A teacher or librarian shall advance one step on the minimum salary schedule for each year of experience as a teacher or librarian until step 20 is reached.

In determining the placement of a teacher or librarian on the minimum salary schedule, a district shall credit the person for each year of experience without regard to whether the years are consecutive.

Reassignments

In the interest of progress or improvement of the programs for students, personnel may be reassigned according to Board policy. Teachers may make written requests for reassignment whenever a vacancy occurs or may apply for any position for which they hold a certification.

Dismissal or Termination Procedures

Employees who terminate their employment with the Veribest ISD should give reasonable notice of termination.

Reassignment may not be accepted after deadlines by local Board policies. Employees under contract should not accept employment elsewhere until the resignation is officially approved. (Reference to policies *DOCC*, *DOBC*, *DOAC*)

A teacher employed under a term contract may resign at the end of the school year without penalty by filing a written resignation with the Superintendent no later than the 45th day before the first day of instruction of the following school year. A resignation notice mailed by prepaid certified or registered mail is considered filed at the time of mailing. The Board of Trustees and a teacher may terminate a term contract at any mutually agreed time.

Reduction in Force Policy

Pursuant to contract provision, a reduction in force (RIF) may take place when the Board determines a financial exigency or program change. Such a determination constitutes the possible dismissal of one or more teachers, administrator(s) or other professional employee(s). Reduction in force shall be made by campus. When a reduction in force is to be implemented, the Board shall first determine which employment areas shall be affected. (*Policy DFF – Local*)

Personnel Job Performance Appraisals

Professional personnel shall be appraised according to guidelines adopted by the local Board of Education and the State Board of Education (*Policy DNA*). All persons appraising teachers will be trained in the use of the PDAS.

Professional Development Activities

Attendance at all staff development sessions is mandatory for school personnel. Absences that are not allowed in accordance with policy DEC, or for which no staff development equivalency hours have been earned shall result in loss of a day's pay for each staff development day missed. Staff development compensatory hours may be earned after school hours, on weekends, or in the summer. Staff development compensatory hours accumulated during the precontract and the contract period applies only to the current year's service. All requests to participate in activities that may earn staff development time must be approved by the building principal and reported to the Superintendent's office. All additional staff development requests including workshops at the Region XV Service Center for the 2006-2007 school year for all personnel, including principals, shall be submitted for approval to the Superintendent with the recommendation of the employee's immediate supervisor. The employee shall supply information about the conference or workshop, and shall justify the administrative and/or instructional, school related purpose to be accomplished at such a meeting.

Miscellaneous Administrative Guidelines

The Workday

The workday for teachers is from 7:45 am until 3:45 pm. Teacher aides and other paraprofessional employees may be assigned a work schedule to meet the needs of the

job responsibility. Other personnel work hours will vary depending upon the position held.

Activities

All activities shall have prior approval of the principal. This approval must be secured at a reasonable time prior to the scheduled date of activity. If an activity requires the use of a bus, the proper request form should be completed and turned in to the office. The sponsoring teacher shall provide every teacher with an extracurricular participation list at least 5 days prior to such events if the event causes a student to miss class. The sponsoring teacher should notify the office so that correct records may be kept of such participation. Each teacher may be assigned other duties such as class sponsorship, UIL coaching and/or judging, keeping gate at athletic events, etc. The principal shall be as fair as possible in assigning such duties.

Community Responsibility – School Responsibility

A teacher must reflect the highest morals and be an example for the community to follow. A teacher is expected, as part of his job, to take part in community and school activities. Each teacher and administrator must attend as many extracurricular and community events as possible. Remember that classroom teaching is the most important part of your job duties, but it is not the total job. Teaching is not an eight a.m. to four p.m. job. Occasionally, your supervisor will require you to attend community, school, and/or Board-related functions.

Correspondence Sent from Veribest ISD

All correspondence sent or mailed to parents by teachers or administrators and other school organizations, i.e. PTO, Scouts, etc. must be proof read and corrected. It is usually best to use the computer in preparing memos to be sent home. Careful attention should be given to proper grammatical construction and spelling. Attitudes and opinions developed by the public can be greatly influenced by the correspondence sent home from a teacher or the administration.

K-12

The Cumulative Record for each student shall be kept in the office of the principal or counselor. The principal and/or counselor shall be responsible for all information on student records.

Fees and Funds

Realizing that occasions will arise that will necessitate the collection of money from students and/or teachers; an orderly written plan must be organized and followed. Therefore, all staff members shall understand the following points:

- Students or teachers may not collect money without prior approval of the PRINCIPAL.
- No items should be purchased for resale without approval of the SUPERINTENDENT.

All activity funds will be maintained in the principal's office through an accounting system approved by the superintendent. The business manager will make regular reports of these funds to the organization's sponsors and to the superintendent. Sponsors should also keep accurate records of all monies handled or passed through their organization. Monies collected by student groups shall be distributed only for purposes authorized by the organization or upon approval of the sponsor. The superintendent or principal shall approve all disbursements. All funds raised by student organizations must be expended for the benefit of the students. The principal will approve fundraisers and determine when students may sell merchandise and collect money during the school day.

Grade Books

Students should be listed alphabetically in the grade book by last name. Sufficient grades shall be given each six weeks to adequately test for mastery of content taught. Absences and tardies are to be recorded daily in the grade book. Grade books are confidential information and may not be viewed by students at any time.

Grading Procedures

According to School Board policy, all grades in 1-5 shall be in numerals in the grade book and on the report card. Use the following scale that appears on the report card:

- 90-100 Outstanding Achievement (A)
- 80-89 Above Average Achievement (B)
- 70-79 Average Achievement (C)

Any grade below a 70 is considered unsatisfactory achievement – this is a failing grade (f).

Grades should accurately reflect skills learned and progress of the students. A variety of work samples should be collected to reflect student growth. Teachers in primary grades will keep student portfolios in addition to grades in the grade book.

Grades 6-12

Teachers will use their own method for determining six weeks grades from the student's work as kept in the grade book. A copy of grading procedures should be filed in the principal's office and a copy sent home with the students. When reteaching for mastery, the teacher shall average the original and subsequent grades together to determine the final grade. According to School Board policy, all grades will be kept in numerals in the grade book and on the report card. The following scale is used to represent achievement on the report card:

- 90-100 Outstanding Achievement (A)
- 80-89 Above Average Achievement (B)
- 70-79 Average Achievement (C)
- Below 70 Unsatisfactory Achievement (F)

On the report card, any grade lower than a 50 shall be recorded as a 50.

Teacher Monitors

Teachers are to monitor the halls between periods. Teachers are to be in the classrooms when the tardy bell rings. Students shall not be left unattended during any class; an adult monitor should be secured. All visitors must check in at the office before proceeding to any classroom. Students shall be called to the office if they have visitors for any reason. Never allow a student to leave with or visit any person during class unless proper notification is given from the office.

Planning Periods

Planning periods are to be used for parent/teacher conferences, class preparation and administrative duties.

Lesson Plan Books

Lesson plan books are furnished for the convenience of the teacher. Lesson plans must be available in case of sudden emergencies so the substitute will be able to make progress in the class while the teacher is out. Subject areas at the top of the book should coincide with the schedule of classes and times for each subject given.

Grade PK-12 lesson plans are to be prepared by Monday of each week and be available for review by the principal.

Progress Reports

Progress reports will be sent to parents at the end of the first three weeks of a six weeks grading period. It is recommended that teachers have conferences with parents when students are failing.

Promotion K-6

Veribest ISD Shall not grant social promotions. Students are promoted only on the bases of academic achievement. To be promoted from one grade to the next, a student shall attain for the year, an overall average of 70 or above which is derived by averaging the final numerical grade of English/Language Arts (Reading, Language, and Spelling), Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. A student may fail one of the core subjects must still maintain an overall average of 70 or above.

Reporting Child Abuse or Neglect

It is the paramount responsibility of all school district personnel to take action to protect the physical and emotional welfare of the children of this State. Any employee of a Texas public school district who believes that a child has been subject to abuse or neglect must make a report. *Texas Family Code, Section 34.01*

After September 1, 1992, reports must be made (1) to a local state law enforcement agency or (2) to the Child Protective Services Division of the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (formerly Child Protective Services of the Texas Department of Human Services). A report made to the Texas Education Agency will not satisfy the statutory reporting requirement.

If the district employee holds any certificate, permit, license or other educational credential issued by the Texas Education Agency, that employee must make a verbal report to the appropriate authorities within forty-eight hours of the incident. (*Texas Family Code, Section 34.02 d.*)

The legal duty to report lies with each person who has cause to believe that abuse or neglect has occurred. It is the responsibility of the individual, not the school district, to make the report. A person who has cause to make a report, but knowingly fails to do so, commits a criminal offense. *Texas Family Code, Section 34.07.*

Any district policy that prohibits or delays an employee's ability to make a report is clearly inconsistent with State Law. Local policy shall not require an employee to report only to persons within the district organization. In addition, districts may wish to consider the soundness of continuing any practice that might appear to penalize an employee for making a report of child abuse or neglect.

Texas public school district employees and offices should cooperate completely in all matters relating to the investigation of any suspected child abuse or neglect. Where a school district investigates allegations concerning its own employees or students, the district should make every reasonable effort to coordinate its investigation with that of law enforcement or Department of Human Services authorities.

Special Instructional Activities

Some instructional activities such as science field trips, visits to museums or historical site, and resource speakers may necessitate occasional deviations from the daily or weekly schedule. However, in scheduling such activities, the District shall use professional discretion to assure that the activities are kept to a minimum and have specified instructional purpose.

Substitutes

The District will endeavor to employ the highest qualified person to substitute in the absence of a teacher. Substitutes are paid \$50.00 per school day and \$25.00 for half a day (4 class periods or less).

Teachers's Lounge

The lounge may be utilized while working during planning periods and as a place to relax during lunch. It is intended solely for the use of staff. Students should NEVER be allowed into the lounge for any reason unless given special permission.

Textbooks

It is the responsibility of the teacher to see that each student is supplied the proper textbook for each class. The teacher shall check textbooks out to the students and maintain a record of each textbook that is checked out. When a student withdraws, and at the end of the year, the teacher shall see that each textbook is properly checked back into the bookroom in its PROPER location. STUDENTS SHALL NOT TAKE TEXTBOOKS TO/FROM THE BOOKROOM WITHOUT THE SUPERVISION OF THE TEACHER.