

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

***PARENT AND STUDENT
HANDBOOK***

**CHOCTAW
TRIBAL SCHOOLS**

2009-2010

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

Approved as Policy by the Choctaw Tribal Council, April 14, 2009

You can find us on the internet at

www.cts.bia.edu

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About this Handbook

This handbook was designed as a guide to the school policies and procedures of our school district and particularly for the elementary schools of the Choctaw Tribal Schools. It may also serve as a reference for contacting people on the school staff. A calendar of events for the year is also provided in the last pages of the handbook. We hope you will find it helpful as one of the many communication pieces designed to keep parents informed and involved in our partnership to provide the best educational experience possible for our children. We are looking forward to another wonderful year.

Choctaw Tribal Schools
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_____, **Director of Schools**
David Germany, Assistant Director of Schools
P. O. Box 6008
122 Division of Schools Drive
Choctaw, MS 39350
Phone 601-650-7302 Fax 601-656-9454

Bogue Chitto Elementary School
13241 Highway 491 North
Philadelphia, MS 39350
Phone 601-389-1000 Fax 389-1002
Principal Evelyn Terrell

Standing Pine Elementary School
538 Highway 487 East
Carthage, MS 39051
Phone 601-267-9225 Fax 267-9129
Principal Jason Roberson

Conehatta Elementary School
851 Tushka Drive
Conehatta, MS 39057
Phone 601-775-8254 Fax 775-9229
Principal Linda Dick

Tucker Elementary School
126 East Tucker Circle
Philadelphia, MS 39350
Phone 601-650-9039 Fax 656-9341
Principal Brooke Sibley

Pearl River Elementary School
470 Industrial Road
Choctaw, MS 39350
Phone 601-656-9051 Fax 656-9054
Principal David McCulloch

Choctaw Central Middle School
150 Recreation Road
Choctaw, MS 39350
Phone 601-663-7777 Fax 656-1558
Principal Rodney Tadlock

Red Water Elementary School
107 Braves Blvd.
Carthage, MS 39051
Phone 601-267-8500 Fax 267-5193
Principal Bobby Boone

Choctaw Central High School
150 Recreation Road
Choctaw, MS 39350
Phone 601-663-7777 Fax 663-7776
Principal Greg Carlyle

Choctaw Alternative Education Center
404 Industrial Road, Suite 2
Choctaw, MS 39350
Phone 601-663-7813 Fax 663-7814
CCHS Asst. Principal Liddia Hughes

Occupational Training Center
404 Industrial Road, Suite 2
Choctaw, MS 39350
Phone 601-663-7801 Fax 663-7840
CCHS Asst. Principal Sylvia Johnson

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

Beasley Denson, Tribal Miko

Choctaw Tribal Council

Bogue Chitto

Sammy Clemons, Jr.
Ronnie Henry, Sr.
Doris Ann Thompson

Conehatta

Roger Anderson
Troy Chickaway
Gregory Shoemake

Pearl River

Cyrus Ben
Lola Parkerson
Edward Wesley

Crystal Ridge

Ann Wesley

Bogue Homa

Berdie Steve

Red Water

Phyllis Anderson
Myrtle Ben

Standing Pine

Harrison Ben
Kevin Edwards

Tucker

Dorothy Wilson
Tony Martin

ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTORY

The administrative head of the Choctaw Tribal School System is the Tribal Miko of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. The Tribal Council, particularly through the Committee on Education, determines policy for the Division of Schools and empowers the Education Services Officer and the Director of Schools to execute policy and provide leadership and management for the school system. The Division 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 board of parents/guardians and interested community members who meet with the local school administration on a monthly basis in an advisory capacity for the hiring of school employees and the discussion of all aspects of the school program.

Education Services Officer.....	650-7302
Director of Schools	650-7302
Division of Schools	650-7302
School Business Office.....	650-7302
Exceptional Education Office.....	663-7653
District Registrar's Office	650-7371
District Food Services Office	656-0766
District Maintenance Office.....	656-6612
District Transportation Office	650-9211
Parent/Education Center	656-5724
Bogue Chitto Elementary.....	389-1000
Conehatta Elementary.....	775-8254
Pearl River Elementary.....	656-9061
Red Water Elementary	267-8500
Standing Pine Elementary	267-9225
Tucker Elementary	656-8775
Choctaw Central Middle School	663-7777
Choctaw Central High School	663-7777
Occupational Training Center.....	663-7801
Choctaw Alternative Education Center	663-7813
Tribal Office	656-5251
Tribal Insurance Office	650-1579

Several schools have new phone systems and voice mail capabilities. These are checked regularly by designated staff members. If your phone call is not an emergency, please leave a message and the school staff member you need to reach will get back with you. If the call is an EMERGENCY, please continue to call until you reach someone. In the case of school closure, several schools have emergency message systems on their telephone system which will allow you to access important information. Please contact your local school for more information.

Choctaw Tribal Schools 2009-2010 School Calendar

Approved by the Choctaw Tribal Council April 14, 2009

(Revised 7-15-09 to reflect Tribal Council Resolution 09-102 which deletes Columbus Day holiday.)

First Semester

First Day for Teachers (Local Schools)	August 3, 2009 (Monday)
Staff Development Day – District Meeting	August 4, 2009 (Tuesday)
Teacher Work Day at Local Schools	August 5, 2009 (Wednesday)
First Day for Students (Full Day for Students)	August 6, 2009 (Thursday)
Nanah Waiya Day Holiday	August 14, 2009 (Friday)
Labor Day Holiday	September 7, 2009 (Monday)
First Term Progress Reports	September 9, 2009 (Wednesday)
American Indian Day Holiday	September 25, 2009 (Friday)
Last Day in 1st 9-Weeks (44 days)	October 9, 2009 (Friday)
Staff Development Day (No school for students)	October 12, 2009 (Monday)
First Day in 2nd 9-Weeks	October 13, 2009 (Tuesday)
Community Relations Day (Full day for students)	October 19, 2009 (Monday)
Veterans Day Holiday	November 11, 2009 (Wednesday)
Second Term Progress Reports	November 13, 2009 (Friday)
Thanksgiving Holidays	November 25-27, 2009 (Wed.–Fri.)
Last Day in 2nd 9-Weeks (60% Day) (45 Days)	December 18, 2009 (Friday)

Second Semester

Staff Development Days (No school for students)	January 4-5, 2010 (Mon. and Tues.)
First Day in 3rd 9-Weeks	January 6, 2010 (Wednesday)
Community Relations Day (Full day for students)	January 11, 2010 (Monday)
Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday	January 18, 2010 (Monday)
Third Term Progress Reports	February 9, 2010 (Tuesday)
Presidents Day Holiday	February 15, 2010 (Monday)
Staff Development Day (No school for students)	February 16, 2010 (Tuesday)
Grades 5 & 8 State Science Test	March 3, 2010 (Wednesday)
Grades 4 & 7 State Writing Test	March 10, 2010 (Wednesday)
Last Day in 3rd 9-Weeks (45 Days)	March 12, 2010 (Friday)
Spring Holidays	March 15-19, 2010 (Mon.–Fri.)
First Day in 4th Nine Weeks	March 22, 2010 (Monday)
English II Writing Test	March 24, 2010 (Wednesday)
Community Relations Day (Full day for students)	March 29, 2010 (Monday)
Good Friday Holiday	April 2, 2010 (Friday)
Staff Development Day (No school for students)	April 5, 2010 (Monday)
Fourth Term Progress Reports	April 21, 2010 (Wednesday)
CCHS Subject Area Tests	April 26 – 29, 2010
TerraNova Tests – Grades 1 & 2	May 11 & 12, 2010 (Tues. & Wed.)
MCT2 – Grades 3–8 Curriculum Tests	May 11-13, 2010 (Tues., Wed., Thurs.)
CCHS Graduation	May 25, 2010 (Tuesday)
Last Day in 4th 9-Weeks (60% Day) (47 Days)	May 27, 2010 (Thursday)
Teacher Work Day / Last Day for Teachers	May 28, 2010 (Friday)

181 Instructional Days, 25 Holidays, 9 Staff Development /Teacher Work Days = 215 Days

There are some days included in the school calendar on which students do not come to school. They are as follows:

Holidays – There are seven federal holidays observed during the 2009-2010 school year. They are Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, and Presidents Day.

School Vacation Days- There are also other holidays in the school year on which children do not come to school. They are Nanih Waiya Day, American Indian Day, the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and the Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas vacation, Spring Break, and Good Friday.

It is very important that teachers continue to study and learn better ways to serve their students. One way of doing this is to attend in-service training sessions. On the following days during the 2009-2010 school year, students will not be present at school for part of the day or for the entire day so that teachers may participate in Staff Development activities and teacher work-times:

Monday, October 12, 2009 – No School for Students
Friday, December 18, 2009 – 60% Day for Students
Monday, January 4, 2010 – No School for Students
Tuesday, January 5, 2010 – No School for Students
Tuesday, February 16, 2010 – No School for Students
Monday, April 5, 2009 – No School for Students
Thursday, May 27, 2009 – 60% Day for Students

Community Relations Days

Three days during the school year are designated as Community Relations Days – October 19, 2009; January 11, 2010; and March 29, 2010. **These days are full school days for all students.** Each school will determine its own schedule and notify parents of the times staff members will be available to meet with them. Parents are encouraged to visit the school, receive student report cards, and meet with their children's teachers during these times.

Weather/Emergency Days

The school calendar has one "built-in" extra day that allows one day's flexibility for emergency school closures. **However, in the event that school must be cancelled a second day because of inclement weather or other emergency, the Good Friday Holiday will be cancelled and that Friday will be a regular school day.**

Halitoh!

Holissoh ápisa ilappak falamat hash áyalaká yakókih oklilah. Hapi náyoppah okle chipesakat.
Chahta Immi hicha Chahta annopa átokma okchalichih bannat oklah kil atoksalechi.

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. But they are also very important places for learning about the Choctaw language and culture. We hope that every person associated with the Choctaw Tribal School System – students and staff, tribal members and non-tribal members – will all learn together about our rich Choctaw past, our vibrant Choctaw present, and our bright and shining Choctaw future!

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

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

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

OUR MOTTO, VISION AND GOALS

Our Motto

Alla Momat Ikkana
(All Children Learn)

Our Vision

In the pursuit of excellence and believing that Alla momat ikkana, all children learn, Choctaw Tribal Schools strive to become exemplary and preeminent schools which inspire, challenge, and empower students and staff for success in a globally competitive society.

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 the 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
- Develop cultural pride and demonstrate knowledge of their language and cultural heritage
- Reduce dropout rate by 50% and increase graduation rate
- Maintain school campus where students are safe and parents feel welcomed, informed, and involved

Believing all children 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 student

HISTORY

The Choctaw Indian Reservation consists of 35,000 acres of trust land scattered over seven counties in east central Mississippi. The nearly 10,000 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 at all 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 not constructed until 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 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 (the *Miko*) 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, the largest unified reservation school system in the country – 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 No Child Left Behind, 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.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

Attendance Boundaries

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

Any other request to enroll children in a tribal school which is not in their community of residence must have **prior** approval from the Tribal Mjko. Requests for approval must be acquired from the Choctaw Tribal Schools Registrar's office who will be responsible for acquiring all the necessary signatures. Students are not allowed to enroll in or attend an out-of-boundary school until approval is obtained.

Approved request remain valid until the end of the school year for which approval was requested. Parents may only request approval for the current school year. Request for the following school year may be made during the summer break.

Approval will be revoked if the child is enrolled in another school, or if the parent or guardian receives written notification of the contrary.

Parents or guardians of out of boundary students must notify the registrar of any address changes during the school year.

Enrollment Packet

The student Enrollment Packet is an important source of information for the school office. It provides the family's address, phone number, and emergency contact numbers. It is used by teachers, the administrator and other office and health personnel in daily contacts with families. A newly completed packet is required each year for each child in attendance and must be completed in a timely fashion at the beginning of the school year. Newly completed enrollment packets must be completed and turned in to the school within ten (10) days of the school year beginning. Students without registration packets by this time 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 back in school. Enrollment documents are available each year by mid-July for families to complete prior to the start of the school year. **Please inform the office of any changes in student information throughout the year, most importantly changes in work and emergency phone numbers.**

New Students

Enrollment information can be obtained from the school counselor or registrar's office. The following documents must be on file when a student enrolls in school.

- Birth Certificate
- Social Security Card, or a completed application for a Social Security Identification Card
- Immunization Health Compliance Form
- Indian Student Eligibility Certification Form
- Notarized letter of custody (if you are enrolling a child in which you are not listed on the birth certificate) or court document
- Withdrawal Form and Grades from Previous (if transfer student)
- Student Enrollment Application Form
- Parental Consent Form
- School Medical History Form
- Medical Consent Form
- USDA application for free and reduced meals

- Privacy Act Information
- Check-out Permission Form
- Parent/Student Agreement Form (In the back of this Handbook)
- Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- After School Application Form
- Pre-Kindergarten Only: An official withdrawal form from Day Care and Head Start programs administered by the Division of Early Childhood Education.

Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) Program Enrollment

Students are formally enrolled in the Pre-Kindergarten program based on the date that all required documentation is on file for the child. (See New Student Enrollment Information). Parents are encouraged to enroll their child in the Pre-Kindergarten program. A waiting list will be maintained at the school if the classes should fill up. Parents should let the school counselor at their school know their intentions of enrolling their child in the program beginning on May 1st of each previous school year. Parents on the waiting list will then be notified of openings. Parents are reminded that upon enrollment in Pre-K, students fall under the compulsory attendance requirements for all other students in the Choctaw Tribal Schools. Accreditation standards limit Pre-K class size to no more than 20 students.

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 guidance counselor's office.
- Turn in all books.
- Pay any fines or damage costs.
- If transferring in from another school, bring a copy of the student's grades, withdrawal form, and necessary enrollment documents.
- 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. 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.

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. When a student transfers into the Choctaw Tribal School System from an ungraded program, an unaccredited program, or a home-school program, it is the school system's responsibility to ensure that the student's grade-level placement is consistent with the student's educational achievement. In grades K-8, the counselor at the local school, in coordination with the school principal, will administer a standardized placement test to the student, the *Woodcock-McGrew-Werder Mini-Battery of Achievement (MBA)*. The counselor and the principal will consider the student profile results from the MBA, any 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.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance in school is vital to your child's progress. The hands-on experiences and group discussions that are missed cannot be made up, making consistent, regular attendance imperative to a successful school experience for your child. It is also important to school funding which is based on average daily attendance. Schools have not achieved AYP in the past due to attendance issues of students. **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.

Daily Schedules

Bogue Chitto Elementary (PreK-8)

Doors Open: 7:00 a.m.
Breakfast: 7:30 – 7:55 a.m.
School begins **8:00 a.m. promptly**
Lunch 11:00 – 12:30 p.m. (Shifts)
PreK dismissal 2:00 p.m.
Dismissal 3:00 p.m. (Regular School)
After School Dismissal 4:30 p.m.
Office Hours: Monday – Friday 7:30 – 4:30

Conehatta Elementary (PreK-8)

Doors open: 7:00 a.m.
Breakfast: 7:15 - 7:55 a.m.
School begins: **8:00 a.m. promptly**
Lunch: 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
PreK dismissal: 3:00 p.m.
After School Dismissal: TBA
Office Hours: Monday - Friday 7:30 - 4:30

Pearl River Elementary (PreK-6)

Doors Open: 7:00 a.m.
Breakfast: 7:15 – 7:55 a.m.
School begins: **8:00 a.m. promptly**
Lunch: 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (Shifts)
Pre-K Dismissal: 2:30 p.m.
After School Dismissal: TBA
Office Hours: Monday – Friday 7:30 - 4:30

Red Water Elementary (PreK-8)

Doors Open: 7:00 a.m.
Breakfast 7:30 a.m. – 7:55 a.m.
School begins **8:00 a.m. promptly**
Lunch: 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
PreK dismissal: 3:00 p.m.
After School Dismissal TBA
Office Hours: Monday – Friday 7:30 – 4:30

Standing Pine Elementary (PreK-6)

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 2nd Lunch 12:00
Pre-K Dismissal: 3:00 p.m.
After School Dismissal: TBA
Office Hours: Monday – Friday 7:30 – 4:30

Tucker Elementary (PreK-8)

Doors Open: 7:15 a.m.
Breakfast: 7:30 a.m.
School Begins: **8:00 a.m. promptly**
Lunch 1st Lunch 11:30 2nd Lunch 12:00
Pre-K Dismissal: 2:00 p.m.
After School Dismissal: TBA
Office Hours: Monday – Friday 7:30 – 4:30

Arrival

Each elementary 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.

Dismissal

Each elementary school dismisses from the regular school day at 3:00 p.m. Students who ride buses will be supervised and placed on their proper bus for transport home. 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*).

Between 3:00 and 3:30 p.m. students in the after school program will be supervised by staff members as outlined by the school principal, and then delivered to the care of the After School Program staff at the determined location and time.

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 programs hours and required pick up times.

Arriving Late to School (Tardiness)

The school day begins promptly at 8:00 a.m. **Being tardy is very disruptive to your child's morning routine as well as those of his/her classmates.** Please assist us in meeting your child's educational needs by making sure your child is at school before 8:00 a.m. If arriving at 8:00 a.m. or later, a parent/guardian **must** bring the student to the office to sign in. Students who are late due to a late school bus or problems with breakfast service in the school cafeteria will not be counted as tardy.

Infrequent tardiness will be dealt with by the classroom teacher. Repeated tardies will be dealt with by the school principal. In cases of excessive tardiness, efforts will be made to notify parents by phone, letters and/or home visits and then the student's name will be referred to the School Attendance Officer.

Each school will outline their procedures for recording and handling student tardiness and distribute this to their parents/guardians at the beginning of the school year.

Sign Out 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 his/her classroom teacher with a note sent to school with your child 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.
- Secretarial staff will release your child after you have signed them out. 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.
- Absences resulting from early checkout will be determined as excused or unexcused in accordance with policy. Students must be in attendance a majority (more than 50%) of the day to be counted present.

Excused Absences

If your child is going to be absent from school please call the office before 8:30 a.m. or notify the school in advance when you know your child will miss for approved reasons. We are required to document the reason for every student absence; therefore, calls or home visits will 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** - 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. 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** – 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.

3. **Parental** – Students shall be allowed three (3) parental notes per semester to excuse an absence. 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.
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 School. These may include, but are not limited to, valid educational opportunity, educational travel, and religious events but must be approved before the absence occurs.

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. We want to work with you to ensure all attendance is recorded properly.

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.
- 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 a grade of “zero” for any graded assignments or tests he or she missed during that period of absence.

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-Suspension will be counted as ‘present’ and given opportunity to make up all work in the same time frame as their peers in class.

Compulsory Attendance and Truancy

Choctaw children who are five 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 3-3-36, 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) unlawful absences at any time during the school year, the school staff will report such truancy to the School Attendance Officer and to Choctaw Social Services, if deemed appropriate.

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 responsible for filing a petition with the tribal Court when attendance issues are not resolved with compulsory-school-age students.
- Record home visits and any other correspondence to parent, guardian, or custodian of a compulsory-school-age child in the school data-base system.
- 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.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Overview

The elementary school curriculum uses the Mississippi Department of Education PreK-8th grade framework. The first step towards success for each student is to master basic skills. Choctaw Tribal Schools believe, **Alla Momat Ikkana** that all children can learn challenging materials and reach their full potential. Choctaw culture, language arts, math, science, and social studies instruction is provided by the classroom teacher through a variety of teaching strategies.

In an effort to effectively share information about your child's education, the school will provide parents with curriculum information to keep you informed about subject requirements. A district pacing guide is given to each Pre-K through eighth grade teacher at the beginning of each school term to make certain that all objectives are taught. The pacing guide keeps teachers focused while providing the same quality instruction for all students. The instructional goal is for teachers to plan classroom work effectively to meet the needs of the child and assist parents in understanding their student's success with the academic standards. Mastery sheets provide students, parents, teachers, and administrators an overall view of student progress and achievement. The curriculum department works with Choctaw Tribal School teachers to ensure that the alignment with curriculum, assessment, and instruction is current with new research-based educational trends.

*Objectives will be given to parents at the beginning of the 2009/2010 school term See page 48 for more information on Elementary Curriculum Framework.

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. All students in grades 1-12 will take district-level standardized tests in Spring 2010. Students in grades 1-2 will take the TerraNova Achievement Tests. Students in grades 3-8 will take the Mississippi Curriculum Tests. These tests are required by the federal **No Child Left Behind** law and are used in the determination of each school's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Students failing to take standardized tests could jeopardize the school's accreditation status.

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, the P.E. grade should not disqualify and elementary student from the honor roll.

Grading Policy

In grades 1-12, students attending the Choctaw Tribal Schools will receive numerical grades on their report cards at the end of each nine-week grading period and will be eligible for the honor roll. If Spelling is taught as a separate subject, spelling grades shall be included in the Language Arts average. Letter grades will correspond with numerical averages as follows:

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

In Kindergarten, teachers will report 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

Term or nine week averages will be recorded on report cards as number grades according to the following procedures:

Tests (minimum of 3)	=	50%
Assignments	=	35%
Nine-weeks Test	=	15%

Tests = unit/skill tests

Assignments = homework, class work, class projects, Accelerated Reader, and additional work assigned by the teacher

Nine-weeks Test = A summative grading period test, as required by the district curriculum office, will be given at the end of each nine-weeks grading period

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.

Mid-term Progress Reports

Progress Reports will be given to students four times a year. Each student will receive a progress report from his/her teacher to be taken home, reviewed by the parent or guardian, signed and returned the next day. Dates for progress reports are indicated on the school calendar.

Homework

The Choctaw Tribal School System emphasizes the importance of daily homework assignments that are meaningful and appropriate for individual student learning. As part of the instructional program, classroom teachers will assign homework daily for students to complete. 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.

Textbooks

The school must follow the rules and regulations of the Mississippi State Textbook commission regarding the issuing of textbooks. Book assignments for each student are entered on a textbook card by the teacher. The cards are taken home and must be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to the school. When the student turns in his or her books at the completion of their use, the student will receive a portion of the textbook card signed by the teacher indicating that all books are returned to the school.

- Lost or damaged books must be paid for by the student or his/her parent/guardian before another is issued. All fines must be paid so that student records may be cleared.
- Part of the school experience is learning to be responsible. All students are expected to return their textbooks or, if a book is lost, to see to it that the book is paid for. Any student who still owes for a book after the books are due to be returned will lose his or her privilege to engage in the following activities: extracurricular activities such as sports, band, cheerleading, school clubs, etc.; and any school trips, including field trips, dorm trips, Upward Bound trips, etc.
- 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. (2) The student or parent/guardian may pay the debt directly.

Honor Roll

An Honor Roll of students in grades 1-8 will be published one week after the report cards are issued following each nine-week term. To be on the Miko's List, a student shall have an average of 90 or higher when all subjects are averaged together. To be on the Principal's List, a student shall have an average of at least 80 or better when all subjects are averaged together.

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 from the beginning of the school day until the close of the school day. Perfect attendance awards for the end of the year district award banquet will be based only on the first three nine weeks.

District Awards Banquet

Choctaw Tribal Elementary Schools honor kindergarten through eighth grade students at an annual awards banquet. Students receive recognition during the April 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.

Other Awards – Individual schools may give other awards according to their own established criteria.

Promotion & Retention Policy

- A student will be promoted based upon mastery of competencies 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 competencies and objectives for the specific course.
- Materials presented and assessed must be inclusive of all State competencies and objectives for the specific course. To be promoted a student must achieve a passing grade in math, language arts/English, reading, science and social studies. Student will be retained if they do not meet these requirements.

Retention Due to Excessive Absences

- In grades K-8, a student who accumulates more than 20 absences in the school year will be recommended for retention in the same grade. **These numbers include all absences, whether excused or unexcused.**
- If a student has missed 20 days or more and has been recommended for retention, parents/guardians may request a Child Study Team (comprised of a student's classroom teacher, the school principal, and one additional teacher not teaching the student) meeting to review and discuss special circumstances in which it would be in the child's best interest to move to the next grade level. Each situation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis with the team members signatures required. Social promotion is strongly discouraged and is appropriate only in extraordinary circumstances.

Social Promotion

Parents/guardians and school personnel must work together to identify remedies or alternative educational opportunities for students being considered for social promotion including any need for special education services, tutoring programs, alternative programming or behavioral support to help the student catch up with his/her peers. Before a student can be either socially promoted to a higher grade or moved back a grade for exceptional reasons, a Child Study Team (comprised of a student's classroom teacher, the school principal, and one additional teacher not teaching the student) must meet and make a recommendation. See Special Education Students section for guidance on promotion and retention.

Special Education Promotion

The decision to promote or to retain special education students will be made on an individual basis using specialized criteria by a School Child Study Team. This committee will be made up of the student's special education teacher, regular classroom teacher, the principal and one additional teacher not teaching the student.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Telephone Use

Telephones are for business use only. Students will not be permitted to make or receive personal telephone calls. Staff may contact parents and have parents communicate with their child as needed.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

The Choctaw Tribal Schools encourage teachers and parents to meet regularly 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. Additionally, 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. Teachers shall refer parents to the office if an appointment has not been made for a conference.

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. Please help us by completing the *Parent and Community Members 'Right to Know' Form* found on page 47.

BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Code of Conduct

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.

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.

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 to 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.

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.

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.

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.

- 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, if appropriate, chairs left properly spaced at each table.
- All food items must be disposed of properly. No food may be taken from the cafeteria.
- Students are not permitted to bring any drink items into the cafeteria.
- Students must not break into the lunch line or hold places in line for other students.
- The cafeteria will close at 8:00 a.m. for breakfast. Students arriving after 8:00 a.m. will not be served.

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.

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.

The Director of Schools shall review all disciplinary actions referred to him and make final decisions regarding disciplinary actions taking into consideration the student's individual needs, age, and personal discipline file.

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.

Cause for Disciplinary Action

A pupil is required to conduct him or herself properly while under school supervision. A pupil may be paddled, detained, suspended, or expelled according to the nature and frequency of the action. Administrators and teachers shall hold students accountable for disorderly conduct or misconduct at school; on the way to and from school; at school meetings, programs, functions, and activities; and upon school buses. The principal or assistant principal is authorized to institute appropriate disciplinary action including immediate suspension, if warranted, of any student for disorderly conduct or misconduct including, but not limited to the following:

1. Fighting
2. Disorderly conduct
3. Harassment, intimidation, or threats
4. Disruption of school operations, functions, programs, or activities
5. Disobedience
6. Disrespect
7. Insubordination
8. Insulting behavior
9. Insulting language
10. Obscene language
11. Vandalism
12. Malicious mischief
13. Theft
14. Damage to private or school property
15. Indecent exposure
16. Public displays of affection (including in cars parked in the vicinity of any school building or activity)
17. Leaving class, school, or a school program without proper authorization
18. Under the influence and/or in possession of a controlled substance
19. Any offense otherwise punishable by law

Classroom Discipline

Teachers will provide students and/or parents with a list of rules and consequences, both positive and negative, which will be used in individual classrooms. These rules and consequences will vary from class to class as determined by the class, the subject matter, and individual differences.

Teachers are expected to develop classroom rules to address classroom disturbances such as inappropriate talking, violations of classroom safety, distracting behavior, failure to carry out directions or complete assignments, or any activity that disrupts the teaching/learning environment.

Classroom teachers are expected to take immediate and appropriate action to enforce classroom and school rules. These actions may include: verbal warning or reprimand, special assignment, restricting activities, assignment of work details, counseling, withdrawal of privileges, or supervised study (detention) conducted at the end of the school day (at least 24 hour notice is required). Teachers shall not assign detention during the school day that makes a student tardy to another class. Teachers are always encouraged to contact parents and to make parent contact when violations of proper behavior are repeated.

In the elementary schools, student misconduct will be categorized into three levels of severity and dealt with accordingly.

LEVEL ONE

Behavior - Violations of the school or teacher's classroom rules that disrupt classroom operations, but are not disrespectful or disobedient to the teacher.

Result - Corrective action shall be accomplished by the teacher. This corrective action may include the following: counseling with the student; warning the student of further consequences; conducting parent conferences; referring the student to the 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.

LEVEL TWO

Behavior - Continued level one violations which the teacher is unable to correct; behavior that seriously disrupts classroom or school operations; behavior that is disrespectful or disobedient to the school staff, including the use of profane language; refusal to accept corrective actions for level one behavior; repeated tardiness; health and safety violations such as spitting or unsafe laboratory actions; inappropriate public displays of affection; improper or disruptive dress or appearance; use or possession of tobacco, matches or lighters; or other similar misbehavior.

Result - Corrective actions will be taken by the principal. Examples of disciplinary actions to be taken at this level include the following: counseling; corporal punishment, if authorized by the parent(s)/guardian(s); in-school isolation, when resources permit; parent conferences, restriction from extracurricular activities; after school detention, when arranged with parent or guardian; the addition of increased academic responsibilities such as homework or special projects; suspension from school for up to three days; or other appropriate actions.

All students disciplined for violations at level two will be put on a defined period of probation at the discretion of the principal, parents will be notified in writing of the incident, the corrective action taken, and the defined period of probation preferably through personal contact or by mail. If the parent cannot be reached through personal contact on the same day that the incident occurs, a disciplinary action report form will be mailed to the home.

LEVEL THREE

Behavior - Level two violation committed while on probation; refusal to accept corrective actions for level two behavior; behavior which threatens the student, other students (fighting), staff, or the school; possession of weapons; destruction of property; alcohol, drug, or inhalant use, possession or transfer of possession; sexual intercourse, molestation or harassment; other actions of a severe nature.

Result - Corrective action will be taken by the school principal. Examples of disciplinary actions to be taken at this level include the following: increased in-school isolation or detention; restriction from extracurricular activities for extended periods of time; monetary restitution for damage caused by actions; involvement of law enforcement, Children and Family Services, or other community service agencies; suspension from school for up to ten days; recommendation to the Director of Schools for extended suspension or expulsion from school; other actions appropriate for the situation.

Possession of a gun or explosive device on campus, including in a vehicle, will result in automatic suspension, referral to the District Discipline Review Committee and may result in expulsion.

All students disciplined for violations at level three will be put on a defined period of probation as determined by the school principal. Parents/Guardians will be notified in writing of the incident, the corrective action taken, and the defined period of probation preferably through personal contact or by mail. If the parent cannot be reached through personal contact on the same day that the incident

occurs, a disciplinary action report form will be mailed to the home. In all cases where corporal punishment is administered, a discipline form must be completed and mailed to the parent.

Parent Notification

In the case of discipline referrals, the school will make every effort to contact parents to keep you informed of your child's behavior. Please keep all phone numbers current at the school so we may reach you.

Level 1 and 2: Principal, Social Worker, Home/School Liaison, Teacher or Counselor will contact parent by phone. If unable to reach, secretary will contact by phone and if unable to reach will mail referral. (Attempts to reach parents will be documented).

Level 3: In the case of an out-of-school suspension, parents/guardians must be notified before the suspension begins. The designated staff member will schedule the required school conference where the parents must meet with the principal before the student may return to school and give the date to the principal or appropriate secretary.

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**. 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 isolation is a mandatory alternative punishment.**
- 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.

In-School Isolation

In-School Isolation (ISI) is a disciplinary action of removing a student from a scheduled class and placing him or her in an isolated, closely supervised environment in an effort to correct behavior. The ISI room will be monitored by an adult employed by the school system. The intent of ISI is to correct behavior that led to their placement and help students successfully return to the regular classroom. Elementary principals may designate an in-school isolation room at the local level. In cases where this form of discipline is utilized, parents will be notified of the local schools ISI location and rules expected to be followed.

- Students will receive assignments from their classroom teacher who will check on their progress during the day.
- Students will be assigned time to work on conflict resolution skills or decision making training to build opportunities for better behavior. A behavior contract will be completed that will be turned in to the Principal prior to returning to the regular classroom.
- Placement in ISI does not count as an absence for the student and the student must complete assigned work that they may have missed in the classroom in order to receive a grade.
- Students who refuse to follow the guidelines of ISI will be subject to out-of-school suspension.
- 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 participation in or attendance to all school-related events or non-school events hosted on the school campus.

- Out-of-school suspension (OSS) can be assigned to students from one (1) to ten (10) days based on the severity of the offense related to the school or classroom rules.
- Suspension days are considered unexcused absences, with students receiving 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.

Special Education Students

Special education students may not be suspended or placed in an alternative setting for more than a total of ten school days in the year unless one of the following situations occurs:

1. Possession of a weapon at school or at a school- related activity
2. Possession or use of an illegal drug
3. Sale or solicitation of a controlled substance
4. IEP Team decision

If such a situation occurs, placement in an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) is considered appropriate. However, the following must take place during the placement:

1. IAES must enable the student to continue to participate in the general curriculum.
2. IAES must provide services and modifications described in the current IEP.
3. IAES must provide services and modifications which address the student's behavior "so that it does not recur."

In the event that a special education student is suspended for any of the above reasons, an IEP meeting must be held within 10 days of the disciplinary action. The IEP team, which includes the parents/guardians, will evaluate the student's behavior in light of the student's disabilities to determine the type of behavioral plan needed and whether placement in an interim alternative education facility, not to exceed 45 days, is warranted. The determination of the IEP team will be sent to the Disciplinary Committee for the Due Process Hearing

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 Education Services Officer, (3) the Tribal Mjiko, (4) the Tribal Council.
- 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.

Detention

Students may receive Early Morning Detention, Saturday 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. Any appeal to the Director of Schools of a decision regarding academic dishonesty will be reported in writing to the Tribal Council Committee on Education.

Discipline Review Committees

(Choctaw Tribal Council Resolution 05-083, June 2, 2005)

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 Division of Schools, or other placement available to the Division 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 or 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 Division 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 protection of due process of law; 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 that they may be represented by legal counsel not at the expense of the school.
4. Hearings shall be closed to the public to protect the student.
5. The student shall be given an opportunity to give his version of facts and their implications. He 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 reduced to writing and sent to the student, parent, and the Director of Schools.
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, the Education Services Officer, and, ultimately, to the Tribal Miko.
12. Appeals must be submitted within five (5) business days of the parent notification of the decision by Certified Mail from the presiding officer.
13. If an appeal is submitted, the Director of Schools, Education Services Officer, or Tribal Miko will act only upon the record from the hearing.

Definitions Related to Discipline

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

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

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

Assault—Any attempt with force and violence to do bodily injury to another; includes threatening, bullying and other forms of intimidation.

Disobedience—The failure to act upon or to follow instructions by the person in charge.

Vulgar language—The use of words which are offensive to anyone present to tend to defame the character of another person.

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.

Obscenity—An act or expression which is offensive to the prevailing concepts of morality or decency of the school community; stressing or suggesting indecency, lust or depravity, offensive to the senses.

Truancy—An act of being absent without permission from school or class.(Includes tardiness).

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

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

Weapons possession—Having in one's possession 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.

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.

Drug possession-- Students responsible in any way for illegal drugs 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.

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.

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

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 or verbal comments.

Public 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"

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

UNIFORM POLICY (Dress Code)

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. To assist in maintaining this focus, a school uniform policy will be implemented and effective August (First Student Day), 2009. Adherence to a uniform dress code serves two purposes:

- (1) Students are not distracted from school work and activities due to focusing on attire.
- (2) School uniforms contribute to maintaining a safe campus.

Students are required to be in uniform the entire time they are on campus during both the regular school day and after school program. Students who ride Choctaw Tribal School buses must be in uniform when being transporting to and from school.

Uniform Guidelines

Shirts:

- Must be of a solid color; either white, gray or maroon
- Must have a collar (Polo or Oxford style only)
- May be short sleeve or long sleeve
- No brand logos can appear on shirts, sweater or sweater vests with the exception of the school district approved logo
- (Optional) Sweater or sweater vests (if selected) would be worn approved uniform shirt. They must be of a solid color, either white, gray or maroon
- The school logo is not required on uniform tops
- Shirts must be tucked with the student wearing a solid brown or black belt.
- Shirts must be appropriate size for the student

Bottoms:

- Khaki pants, shorts, skorts, and skirts only (Minimum Length: Bottoms must meet the minimum specification of extending at least two inches beyond the end of the student's fingertips when the student is standing straight with arms down the side.)
- Styles allowed: Pleated front or flat front pants, with no outside pockets (e.g. carpenter pants). Pants are to be cotton or cotton blend material
- Belts must be worn and be solid brown or black.
- Logos on pants, shorts, skirts, etc. may not be larger in size than 1 inch by 2 inches and must be located above the rear pockets
- Bottoms must be appropriate size for the student.
- All bottoms must be worn at the student's waist. No Sagging.

Shoes:

- Must be athletic/tennis shoes or dress shoes
- Must be low tops, no high top shoes allowed
- Must be of solid color; white, brown, or black
- Can not have any special or distracting markings
- No open toe shoes, sandals, or flip flops allowed

Jackets & Coats:

- A coat or jacket will be defined as a garment that opens and closes completely down the front and zips, buttons or snaps. Hoods on jackets are not allowed.
- Jackets, sweaters or coats THAT ARE TO BE WORN ALL DAY must be white, gray, or maroon. Logos will not be allowed on jackets unless an approved school logo. (Items that do not meet this criteria may be worn to school, removed and then hung up in the classroom; only being used when going outside the building).

Headwear:

In extreme cold weather, students may wear a toboggan that would be removed once inside the building. Toboggans must be white, gray or maroon in color with no logo or wording (unless approved school logo).

Additional Dress Guidelines:

- No colors, bandanas, symbols, signs or dress associated with gangs or cults will be tolerated. These will result in suspension or expulsion as determined by the Discipline Review Committee.
- Clothing can not be baggy.
- Cleanliness of dress and body is mandatory.
- No hats or caps shall be allowed on school premises (these items will be confiscated and not returned).
- No students shall have their body parts painted with paint, liquid paper, ink, or other distracting marks.
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses must meet the minimum specification of extending at least two inches beyond the end of the student's fingertips when the student is standing straight with arms down the side.
- Sunglasses are not allowed.
- If an item of dress is questionable or may be subject to criticism, DO NOT WEAR IT.

Violations of Uniform Policy

Level 1: Student with up to three violations will receive a documented verbal warning. Parent will be notified through phone call or letter.

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

Level 3: Student will receive In-School Isolation (until violation is corrected) or Out-of-School Suspension

Athletic Travel Wear

All students traveling with athletic teams will wear school uniforms or official travel uniforms designated by the team coach.

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. Uniform bottoms will remain the same.

Special Day

Principals may designate special days for academic reasons to allow a deviation from the dress code for students, which will be announced and promoted prior to the event.

Transfer Students Compliance

Students who transfer to Choctaw Tribal Schools from another school district will be allowed ten (10) school days from the time of enrollment to purchase or acquire uniforms and comply with the Choctaw Tribal School Uniform Policy.

Purchasing School Uniforms

Vendors who are aware of our dress code policy and can assist you with your purchases are listed below. If you are a business that is interested in being added to our vendor list, please phone 601-650-7302.

Occupational Training Center
Wal-mart
Williamsville

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

Cellular phones, radios, TVs, tape/CD players, I-Pods, MP3's, lasers, cameras, or any other related devices are not allowed at school or on the school bus, unless required for a school related activity and written permission is given. In such cases, the device shall be left with sponsoring leaders or in the principal's office until needed. Other than these reasons, student electronic possession or use during the school day will result in the item being confiscated. First offense – the parent will be required to pick up the item and pay a \$10.00 penalty fee. Second offense – the item will be held until the end of the year and a \$10.00 penalty fee will be required for its release. All items not claimed by the end of the year will be discarded.

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 SERVICES

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.

During the school year 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
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

Library

All students are entitled to use the library and to check out books. Students must observe all rules posted in the library. Elementary school students will visit the library according to schedules and arrangements at their local schools. Students will not be excused from the library for any reason except to return to class.

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 one week. Students may renew books if they wish.
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.

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.

Internet Use Policy

Internet and network access is provided to the students and staff at Choctaw Tribal Schools. Education is the primary function of Choctaw Tribal Schools. Computers are tools with which to perform research, retrieve information, compile data, and create documents.

By signing the Acceptable Use Policy*, the students, staff, and students' parents or guardian agree to obey the rules outlined in the Acceptable Agreement/Use Policy. This document describes responsibilities for use of the network and Internet and also consequences when the privileges are abused. 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 operators do not 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 of others' passwords.
- Users shall not damage computers, computer systems or computer networks, which includes altering software components of a computer or system.
- Transmission or intentional receipt of hate mail, harassment, and other antisocial behaviors are prohibited on the network.
- Users shall not use the network to access or process pornographic material, inappropriate text files, or any illegal activity.
- Students agree not to play games on the computers unless authorized by monitoring staff.
- Users agree not to use the chat rooms.
- Users agree not to send chain letters.
- Students shall not send, receive or check personal E-mail, except before or after school.

Computer Lab Usage

- All staff members are responsible for monitoring student activity on the network. Staff members assigned to a group of students are responsible for monitoring and overseeing network and Internet activity.
- No food or drinks in the Computer Labs.
- Teachers are expected to have plans before students use the Internet, which include pre-researching sites that are used.

Consequences of Unacceptable Use

- 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.

*Agreement forms are included in the enrollment/registration packet

Homebound Services

When medical reasons make it necessary for a student to be absent from school for ten or more consecutive school days, that student may be placed on a home-bound instructional program developed and implemented by the school principal, the school counselor, and the student's classroom teacher(s). A written recommendation by the student's physician is required before the student can be assigned home-bound status. The physician's statement should also include the date of expected return to school. Students on approved homebound status will receive at least 5 hours of weekly services from a certified teacher. Days away from school on approved home-bound status do not count as student absences after school waivers are approved. These students will receive instruction from a certified teacher a minimum of five hours per week while on homebound status.

Alternative Education Center

The Alternative Education Center is a separate program within the Choctaw Tribal School System, providing alternative placement settings for students with special discipline needs and/or special education rulings. The program works to keep students in school, meet their current educational needs, and provide additional services as determined by a Child Study Team or Multidisciplinary Team. Placement is based on the following criteria:

- Student has a documented history of behavior problems.
- Student is referred to the program by the courts.
- Student is facing expulsion.
- Student has already been expelled or faces disciplinary action from another school and transfers to the Choctaw Tribal School System.
- Student is returning from a detention program.

Students who have special education rulings must have a Functional Behavior Assessment in place before referral to any Alternative Program. (See Behavior Intervention Specialist for more information.) An IEP meeting must also be documented for special education students to describe the behaviors causing concern, to write behavior goals with the student's input, and to show an effort to help the student modify behavior before placement in an alternative program.

In all cases, parents/guardians will have an opportunity to discuss their child's placement into the Alternative Education Center. If the team determines that the Alternative Education Center is the best placement for the student, the parent/guardian cannot override the decision.

There is a minimum student placement time of 45 days at the Alternative Education Center. Students may return to their regular school at the beginning of a new nine-weeks only.

Students who are assigned to the Alternative Education Center will receive mandatory counseling from competent mental health professionals as assigned by the Center Principal. Participation in assigned counseling is required as part of placement.

For security and safety reasons, students in the Alternative Education Center 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 Center 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** before the student may return to the regular education program. For more information about the Alternative Education Center, call 663-7813.

HEALTH SERVICES

Wellness Policy

The Choctaw Tribal School System has adopted the Wellness Policy published by the Mississippi Department of Education and approved by the Choctaw Tribal Council as official policy and guidance for school programs, activities, and curriculum. This policy includes goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other promotions of student wellness, as well as guidance/requirements for school meals, snacks, refreshments, and food sales. All schools will follow the guidelines established in this policy. A copy of this Wellness Policy is included at the end of this handbook. 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 by the beginning of 2006-2007 school year. With this new 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 foodservice 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 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 insure that the school wellness policy is implemented as written.

Emergencies 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 attend 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. Only medications for which proper identification, instructions for dispensing, 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 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.

Sexual 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 counted as "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.

TRANSPORTATION (BUSING)

Bus Policy

It is the policy of the Choctaw Tribal Schools to provide safe and reliable transportation to school each day. 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. Students who ride the school bus are under the authority of the Choctaw Tribal Schools Transportation Department and their respective schools. We urge parents to know the district procedures and rules for transportation.

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. Parents are responsible for having someone at the drop off/home location to meet their child(ren).

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 encouraged to report incidents immediately in order to maintain a safe and secure bus ride for all students. 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.
- Scuffling, fighting, and the use of obscene, vulgar or profane language or gestures are forbidden.
- Do not scratch, mark, or cut any part of the bus. Damage costs will be paid by the person responsible.
- 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 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.

Out-of-Attendance Boundary Route

Students assigned to a special out-of-attendance boundary route 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.

Bus Behavior Referrals

When a student is referred to the school office due to a bus referral, the following process will be followed:

Step 1 – Warning, corporal punishment, or one (1) day suspension from the bus. A phone call will be made to a parent.

Step 2 – Two (2) day suspension from bus. A phone call will be made to a parent.

Step 3 – Four (4) day suspension from bus. A phone call will be made to set a mandatory conference. A personal visit will be made to the home if a parent cannot be reached by phone. If the parent does not attend the required conference, the bus suspension will continue indefinitely.

Step 4 – Ten (10) day suspension from bus. A phone call will be made to a parent and a certified letter sent to the parent. Principal will make recommendation for parent and student to appear before the District Discipline Committee with their child.

Step 5 – Expelled from the bus for the remainder of the school year and probation at the beginning of the next school year for sixty (60) days when the expulsion occurs after March 1.

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 from riding the bus and may also be assigned to the school discipline level where they will receive additional school restrictions and punishment.

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.

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 extra-curricular 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.

Attendance Requirements

Students participating in activities (such as sports, band, cheerleading, Spring festivals) are required to attend classes on the day of the activity.

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 pass his/her grade level by achieving at least an average of 65 or higher in all four basic courses (any subject that meets an equivalent of at least 250 minutes per week) the previous year in order to be eligible to participate during the present year.
- A student must present, from a physician, a statement of physical fitness for participation in athletic competition.

- A pupil who is not eligible at the beginning of the school year may become eligible the second semester only once during the student's seventh/eighth grade career by passing all four basic courses with a 65 average in each course.
- Pupils in the seventh and eighth grades participating in high school extra-curricular activities must pass their grade level by achieving at least an average of D 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.
- Special education students will be academically eligible if they are making satisfactory progress according to the committee reviewing their Individual Education Plan (IEP).
- Beginning in school year 2008-09 and each year thereafter, high school students will be required to pass six credits toward graduation during the school year with a 65 average or better in order to maintain eligibility.

American Indian Day/Week Celebration

- Students who are interested in participating in the pageant must be cleared through the counselor and principal's office based on their grades, behavior and school participation.
- Parent/Guardian permission forms (with rules about the pageant) must be signed before a student can be voted on or participate in contests/pageants/dress reviews.
- Each homeroom class will vote on the selection of one boy and one girl to represent their class. The student with the most votes will represent the class in the pageant.
- Parents/Guardians must notify the school if they do not want their child to participate in programs.
- Participants must not be tardy or have check-outs on the day of the activity.
- It is the responsibility of parents/ guardians to provide items such as dress, shirt, and accessories.
- All decorating will be done by volunteers from Parents/Guardians and Teacher Assistants.
- Contestants for pageants/contests/ reviews and similar activities must arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the event or they will be disqualified from participation.
- No fee can be charged for participation in any American Indian Day/Week activity.
- Brave/Princess winners are ineligible to compete the following year.
- All Judges' decisions will be considered final.
- Braves/Princesses should serve as Ambassadors for their local schools and must maintain a positive status related to academics, behavior and school participation. In cases where a student does not follow the school rules, the first runner-up will replace the Brave or Princess with the individual being required to relinquish their crown and title.

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.
- The 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:
 - 2010 – Tucker Elementary
 - 2011 – Pearl River Elementary
 - 2012 – Bogue Chitto Elementary
 - 2013 – Conehatta Elementary
 - 2014 – Red Water Elementary
 - 2015 – Standing Pine Elementary

Field Trips

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

- The proposed activity and plans for adequate transportation, supervision and resources must be approved by the school principal.
- Parents must be fully informed of the purpose of the trip and of all planned activities. Written permission for student participation as well as provisions to provide emergency medical treatment, if necessary, must be received from the child's parent or guardian before a student will be allowed to take part in these activities.

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. Only fund raising activities sponsored by the school or school-related student/parent organizations may be conducted on school property. Additionally, 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 fund-raising 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

Schools may arrange monthly birthday parties for all students whose birthdays fall in a given month (or time period). The parties must be held during the time of the After School Program. 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.

SAFETY

School Visitors

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

Adults: All parents and adult family members are encouraged to visit the school and to be actively involved in their children's education. All visitors shall obtain permission and a Campus Pass from the principal before entering a class. Adult visitors are certainly welcome in our school since visitation usually expresses wholesome interest in our efforts to maintain a quality program. 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.

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 passes to ensure students are where they are suppose to be. The safety and security of our students is a high priority.

Violence Response

At any Choctaw Tribal School we strive to have a safe and violent-free campus. This includes bullying and intimidation of any kind. When physical contact is witnessed that results in injury of a person, the principal should 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 to the court 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. Every incident reported will be investigated.

Weapons Policy

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 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 ten (10) days. A second offense shall constitute a ten (10) day 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 shall be seized and immediately turned over to the Department of Public Safety.

Other Weapons-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 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 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 school security or Department of Public Safety. 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, 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:

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" or counterfeit substance represented or believed to be any of the aforementioned substances) shall be disciplined according to step 7 of the (high school/middle school) school discipline ladder which includes:

- a. Ten (10) days out-of-school suspension and,
- b. Recommendation of expulsion for one calendar year to the Discipline Review Committee. (Alternative School placement is not seen as appropriate for these offenses.)
- c. In addition, the incident will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement and/or court official and charges filed when possible.

Any individual found to inappropriately possess, distribute, misuse/abuse any prescription or non-prescription drug shall be subject to the same discipline measures.

**Policies for Weapons, Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco Passed by Choctaw Tribal Council Resolution 05-082, June 2, 2005*

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 will be used at least monthly in random and unannounced searches, and more often as need determines. Throughout the year, there will be occasional and unannounced inspections by a law enforcement agency's drug detection dog. Campus security officers will assist the school principal in completion of all safety inspections, searches, and other duties as assigned by the principal to ensure that the campus is a safe environment conducive to learning.

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.

Asbestos

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*

The Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act, codified as Title 18, United States Code § 1169, requires that individuals who have oversight over children and are aware of child abuse should make an oral report to their local law enforcement or child social services. Staff and students will be trained annually on the policy and procedure for reporting child abuse.

In the Choctaw Tribal Schools, a teacher has a legal and ethical duty to report any suspicion of child abuse. If any teacher suspects the possibility of child abuse, the following procedures should be followed:

- (a) report suspected abuse to their school principal or school counselor,
- (b) the school administrator will immediately notify MBCI Department of Public Safety and Department of Children and Family Services,
- (c) a written report (Indian Child Protection Referral Form) which includes the name, address of the child and parent(s) or guardian (s), age of child; school and grade of child; nature and extend of suspected abuse; any known history; alleged offender, if known; and any other pertinent information will be filed with tribal investigator,
- (d) principal shall allow authorized personnel from above mentioned departments conduct an in-school conference with any child who has been reported as possibly abused.

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. Anonymous reporting can also be made through the following hotline number:

Bureau of Indian Affairs National Child Abuse Prevention Hotline 1-800-633-5155

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

EMERGENCY PLANS

School Closure

There may be days that weather conditions will not permit schools to be open. On these occasions the Education Services Officer and the Director of Schools will be responsible for making the decision 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 telephone systems and school web pages.

On the days that weather conditions change for the worse after students are in school, the Education Services Officer and the Director of Schools will make the decision to close schools, and students will be returned home. 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.

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.

Emergency Plans & COOP

Each school must follow the provisions of its Emergency Management Plan and the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP Plan).

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 explicitly 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.
- The right to be free from unreasonable search and seizure of their person, to a safe and secure environment and property, and to a reasonable degree of privacy. (The school retains the right to disseminate to the media pictures and/or information concerning students unless a student's parent or guardian requests in writing to the principal that such information not be released.)
- The right to make his or her own decisions where applicable.
- The right to freedom of religion and culture.
- The right to freedom of speech and expression, including symbolic expression, such as display of buttons, posters, choice of dress, and length of hair, so long as the symbolic expression does not unreasonably and in fact disrupt the educational process or endanger the health and safety of the student or others as long as it does not violate the school dress code.
- The right to freedom of the press, except where material in student publications is libelous, slanderous, or obscene.
- The right to peaceably assemble and to petition the redress of grievances.
- The right to freedom from discrimination.
- The right to due process. Every student is entitled to due process in every instance of disciplinary action for alleged violation of school regulations for which the student may be subjected to penalties of suspension, expulsion, or transfer.
- The right to have an anonymous means with which to report situations in which they themselves or other students have been abused in any manner (at school or away from school). Each case will be investigated. The BIA National Child Abuse Prevention Hotline is 1-800-663-5155.

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 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 mail of the suspension, the notice being mailed within twenty-four (24) hours of the suspension. In addition, a school official should attempt to notify the parent/guardian by phone.

Due Process for 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.
- The above hearing shall be conducted by an expulsion committee composed of two principals and two teachers (none of whom may be from the school in which the student is enrolled at the time of the incident). The meeting shall be chaired by one of the principals.
- A student may appeal an expulsion through the following levels: (1) the Director of Schools, (2) the Education Services Officer, (3) Tribal Miko, (4) the Tribal Council.
- The student will have 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 himself 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.

Statement of Nondiscrimination

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians and 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 extra-curricular 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 Section VI(D) 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.

Choctaw Tribal Schools Elementary Curriculum Framework

The elementary school curriculum uses the Mississippi Department of Education PreK-8th grade framework. The first step towards success for each student is to master basic skills. Choctaw Tribal Schools believe, **Alla Momat Ikkana** that all children can learn challenging materials and reach their full potential. Choctaw culture, language arts, math, science, and social studies instruction is provided by the classroom teacher through a variety of teaching strategies.

PreK-8th Grade Competencies

Language Arts

- Word recognition and vocabulary
- Reading Comprehension
- Composing and Writing
- Grammar, Punctuation, and Sentence Structure

Math

- Numbers and Operations
- Algebra
- Geometry
- Measurement
- Data Analysis and Probability

Science

- Inquiry (ability to ask questions, experiment, measure, problem solving, use scientific tools, gather data, and explain or communicate)
- Physical Science
- Life Science
- Earth and Space Science

Social Studies

- Civics
- History
- Geography
- Economics

Choctaw Instructional Guide

Choctaw Culture

- Choctaw Tribal Mjko
- Tribal Council
- Choctaw Tribal Government
- Tribal Credentials
- Choctaw Tribal Flag
- Pushmataha
- Choctaw Dances
- Basic Colors
- Numbers
- Choctaw Alphabet
- Choctaw Symbols
- Choctaw Stories and Legends
- Choctaw Fair
- Choctaw Communities
- Choctaw Words
- Beading and Patterns
- Language
- Choctaw Chants
- Choctaw Regalia
- Stickball
- Choctaw Baskets
- Choctaw History
- Nanih Waiya Mound
- Choctaw Foods
- Translate Choctaw Words and Sentences

Curriculum Terms

Curriculum Framework

- The guide teachers use to instruct students with important math, language arts, science, social studies, and Choctaw cultural skills

Competency

- Broad guideline of ongoing instruction

Objective

- Skills that explain what must be taught in each grade

DOK Levels

- Explain the level of difficulty that students will be expected to demonstrate or perform

*Objectives will be given to parents at the beginning of the 2009/2010 school term.

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. Please help us by marking the topics you would like to know more about:

- _____ Educational qualifications of your child’s teacher and paraprofessional
- _____ Language Assessment Test Information - Reading, Writing and Oral Scores PreK, K, 1st, 2nd, 4th & 7th
- _____ Language and Math Assessment: Fox in a Box, Grades PreK and K
- _____ National Assessment, Title I data: Terra Nova, Grades 1st and 2nd
- _____ State Assessment, Language Arts & Mathematics: MCT2, Grades 3rd – 8th
- _____ State Assessment, Subject Area Test: English II Writing, English II Multiple Choice, Algebra I, Biology I and U.S. History (Passing score on all Subject Area tests required for graduation.)
- _____ State Assessment, Writing Test: MS Writing Assessment Grades 4th and 7th
- _____ Annual School Report Card (Progress of the School)
- _____ Understanding the Choctaw Tribal Schools / Mississippi Curriculum: Reading, Mathematics, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies
- _____ District Assessment, Nine-Week Test & Mastery requirements, by grade level
- _____ District Support Services: (Circle them)- Technology resources, School web-page, Parent Log-in/student information, Tutorial Services/Daytime and After School, Clubs, PTO, Safe and Drug Free Schools Activities, Special Education, After School Program, Library/Media resources, Transportation, Mobile Bus, counseling, nursing, behavioral support, mental health services, cultural information, LACOS committee, emergency plan, Other _____ (please write in)

If you would like to schedule a meeting, you may fill in the date / time after your signature, or call your local school to set up an appointment. An interpreter will be provided for you if one is needed.

We want to work with you so that the Choctaw Tribal Schools can continue to be an excellent place for your child to learn. Visit us on the district web-site at www.cts.bia.edu or stop by your local school for more information.

Signature _____ Date / Time _____

School _____

PARENT/STUDENT AGREEMENT FORM

This is to verify that I have received and read the student handbook for the 2008-2009 school year.

I understand that maintaining a safe school environment means that random and occasional searches may be made of my child's locker, bookbag, purse, or other personal belongings.

I have read and I agree with the items of the School Home Compact. (Page 18)

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING BLANKS CONCERNING CORPORAL PUNISHMENT:

___ Corporal punishment (paddling) **MAY** be used as a disciplinary measure for my child.

___ Corporal punishment (paddling) **MAY NOT** be used as a disciplinary measure for my child. I understand that if corporal punishment is refused, then in-school or out-of-school suspension is a mandatory requirement.

(If you need answers to questions about the information contained in this handbook, please contact your child's principal).

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

Parent or Guardian

Date

Student

Date

Student's Grade in School _____