

Sumter County Schools

Employee Handbook

2023-2024



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VISION

The Vision of Sumter County Schools is to graduate all students college and career ready who are productive citizens empowered to be competitive in a global society.

MISSION

The Mission of Sumter County Schools is to ensure that all students receive an equitable education equipped with 21st Century Skills through transformational learning experiences.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (GAAA)

The Sumter County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, or sex in its employment practices. It is the policy of the Board of Education to comply fully with the requirements of Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) and all accompanying regulations.

Any employee, applicant for employment, or other person who believes he or she has been discriminated against or harassed in violation of this policy must make a complaint in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Complaints made to the School District regarding alleged discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color or national origin in violation of Title VI; religion or sex in violation of Title VII; sex in violation of Title IX; disability in violation of Section 504 or the ADA, or on the basis of age in violation of the ADEA, will be processed in accordance with the following procedure:

1. Any employee, applicant for employment, or other person with a complaint alleging a violation as described above shall promptly notify, in writing or orally, either the principal for his/her school or the appropriate coordinator designated from time to time by the Board of Education. If the complaint is oral, either the coordinator or school principal to whom the complaint is made shall promptly prepare a memorandum or written statement of the complaint as made to him or her by the complainant and shall have the complainant read and sign the memorandum or statement if it accurately reflects the complaint made. If the complaint is made to a school principal, he or she shall be responsible for notifying the appropriate coordinator of the complaint.
2. If the alleged offending individual is the coordinator designated by the Board of Education, the complaint shall either be made by the complainant to the Superintendent or, if the complaint is initially made to the school principal, reported by the principal to the Superintendent. If the alleged offending individual is the Superintendent, the complaint shall be made to the designated coordinator, who shall, without further investigation, report the complaint to the Board chairperson.

3. The coordinator or his or her designee shall have fifteen work days to gather all information relevant to the complaint made, review the information, determine the facts relating to the complaint, review the action requested by the complainant, and attempt to resolve the complaint with the complainant and any other persons involved. The coordinator or designee shall prepare a written response to the complaint detailing any action to be taken in response to the complaint and the time frame in which such action will be taken and copies of this response shall be furnished to the complainant, the appropriate coordinator and the Superintendent or his or her designee.
4. If the complaint is not resolved at the conclusion of this fifteen-day period or if the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint, the complainant shall have the right, within five work days of receiving a copy of the written response, to have the complaint referred to the Superintendent of Schools. If the alleged offending individual is the Superintendent, the complainant may have the complaint referred to the Board of Education, rather than the Superintendent.
5. The Superintendent shall have fifteen work days to review the complaint and the response of the coordinator or designee and attempt to resolve the complaint. The Superintendent shall furnish to the complainant a written response setting forth either his or her approval of the action recommended by the coordinator or designee or the action to be taken by the School District in response to the complaint in lieu of that recommended by the coordinator or designee and the time frame in which such action shall be taken.
6. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the response of the Superintendent, then the complainant shall have the right, within fifteen work days of the receipt of the written response of the Superintendent, to have the complaint referred to the Board of Education. In order to have the Board review the Superintendent's decision, the complainant must file with the Superintendent a written statement setting forth the reasons he or she disagrees with the response of the Superintendent and the action the complainant is requesting the School District to take. The complainant shall also include in the written response a request that his or her complaint be referred to the Board of Education.

7. Within thirty work days of receipt of the written request of the complainant, the Superintendent shall present the matter to the Board of Education at its regular meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose. The Board shall review the original complaint, the response of the coordinator or designee, the response of the Superintendent, and the response of the complainant. In addition, the Board may, but is not required to, hear directly from any individuals with knowledge of any relevant facts relating to the complaint.
8. The Board of Education will either uphold the recommendation of the Superintendent or require the School District to take some other action in response to the complaint. A copy of the action of the Board will be furnished to the complainant, either as a part of the minutes of the Board of Education or as a separate written statement. The Board shall be the final reviewing authority within the School District.
9. This policy is not intended to deprive any employee of any right they may have to file a grievance pursuant to any other policy of the local Board of Education, specifically the policy designed to implement Official Code of Georgia Annotated 20-2-989.5, where appropriate. This policy is not intended to provide an alternative process for resolving evaluation and employment disputes where there already exists a due process procedure mandated by state law or State Department of Education regulations, specifically including, but not limited to, hearings to be conducted pursuant to the Fair Dismissal Act of Georgia. The complainant retains at all times the right to contact the Office of Civil Rights, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or any other appropriate state or federal agency with regard to any allegations that the system has violated the statutes described above.
10. The School District shall be responsible for distributing and disseminating information relevant to this policy and procedure to employees through appropriate procedures.
11. No reprisal shall occur as a result of reporting unlawful discrimination or harassment under this policy, and any attempt to retaliate against a complainant shall be disciplined as is appropriate.

12. The confidentiality of any individual making a complaint or report in accordance with this policy, to the extent it is reasonably possible and in compliance with law, shall be protected, although the discovery of the truth and the elimination of unlawful harassment shall be the overriding consideration.

Questions, complaints, or requests for additional information regarding these laws may be forwarded to the designated compliance coordinator.

Mrs. Helen Ricketts
Director of Human Resources
100 Learning Lane
Americus, GA 31719
229-931-8500

SCHOOL CALENDAR



Sumter County Schools 2023-2024 System Calendar

July 31- August 1-4, 2023	Pre-Planning
August 3, 2023	Open House
August 7, 2023	1st Day of School
September 4, 2023	Labor Day Holiday
September 6, 2023	Progress Reports
September 15, 2023	Early Release/Parent Conferences
October 9, 2023	End of 1st Nine Weeks
October 11, 2023	Report Cards
October 12, 2023	Early Release/ Curriculum Planning
October 13, 2023	Fall Break
November 15, 2023	Progress Reports
November 17, 2023	Early Release/Professional Learning
November 20-24, 2023	Thanksgiving Break
December 19, 2023	Early Release/ Teacher Workday/
	End of 2nd Nine Weeks
December 20, 2023	Teacher Workday
December 21, 2023-January 3, 2024	Winter Break
January 4, 2024	Teachers Return/Curriculum Planning
January 5, 2024	Curriculum Planning
January 8, 2024	Students Return
January 15, 2024	Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
January 17, 2024	Report Cards
February 7, 2024	Progress Reports
February 16, 2024	Early Release/Parent Conferences
February 19, 2024	Mid-Winter Break/President's Day
March 12, 2024	End of 3rd Nine Weeks
March 13, 2024	Report Cards
March 28, 2024	Early Release/ Curriculum Planning
March 29, 2024	Mid-Spring Break
April 1-5, 2024	Spring Break
April 24, 2024	Progress Reports
May 22, 2024	Last Day of School/Report Cards K-8
	End of 4th Nine Weeks/Early Release/
	Teacher Workday
May 23, 2024	Post Planning/SCHS Baccalaureate
May 24, 2024	Post Planning/SCHS Graduation
May 27, 2024	Memorial Day
May 30, 2024	Report Cards (Grades 9-12)

Approved 4/13/2023

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS (AFC)

The Superintendent or designee is authorized to take action to close one or more of the system's schools if conditions exist that may threaten the health and safety of students and personnel.

The Superintendent or designee is also authorized to delay the opening hour of the school day and/or release students and personnel before the normal school day ends if hazardous conditions exist.

WORK DAY FOR FACULTY AND STAFF

The normal workday for school system employees is eight hours. The schedule for individual schools/departments will be assigned by the principal/supervisor. Sign in sheets will be provided in each school. The normal work year for teachers is defined as 190 days (10 months), ten of which are to be used for planning and professional learning. Staff must make up days missed in the event of school closure due to bad weather. A schedule of work is arranged for preplanning week including countywide teacher meetings and meetings of building faculties and department groups. For post-planning, a schedule of work is arranged for completion of records, reports, inventories, requisition of supplies for next year, and evaluation of the year's work. The work in preplanning and post-planning weeks is a part of the contract for the year's work and all teachers are required to participate.

EMPLOYEE LEAVES AND ABSENCES (GARH)

Accrual of Sick Leave and Absence for Medical and Related Reasons

Employees will be entitled to annual sick leave with pay to be accrued at the rate of one and one-quarter days for each completed working month. All unused sick leave shall be accumulated from one school year to the next up to a maximum of forty-five (45) days. Certified employees and bus drivers are entitled to transfer up to forty-five (45) days of accumulated leave from one school system in the state of Georgia to another. If an employee needs to utilize unearned sick leave, advance leave may be granted. The advance leave shall not exceed the number of days the employee would accumulate through the end of the school year. If an employee fails for any reason to complete a school year, sick leave used but not yet earned will be deducted from the employee's final check.

The leave provided for under this policy is available only for personal illness, injury or exposure to contagious diseases, or for absences necessitated by illness or death in the employee's immediate family.

For any absence in which sick leave is used, the Superintendent shall have the right to require a physician's certificate stating that the employee is ill and is unable to perform his or her duties.

For the purposes of this policy, members of the immediate family are defined as spouse, children, father, mother, brother, sister, grandparents, or in-law equivalents of the above or other relatives living in the household.

Personal and Professional Leave

Three (3) days of any accumulated sick leave may be utilized during each school year for personal or professional reasons provided prior approval of the absence is given by the Superintendent or authorized representative and provided the presence of the employee requesting absence is not essential for effective school operation. Personal and professional leave will not be granted during in-service days or on the day before or day after holidays. Emergency requests for personal and professional leave may be granted at the discretion of the Superintendent or his or her authorized representative.

Employees are not required to disclose the purpose for which such absence is sought but may be required to state whether the absence is for “personal” or “professional” reasons.

Observance of Religious Holidays

Employees may use personal and professional leave for the observance of recognized religious holidays. If an employee desires to take leave for the observance of recognized religious holidays in excess of the days allowed for personal or professional leave, the employee may take unpaid leave for such purposes provided that such leave is not excessive and does not interfere with fulfilling the obligations of his or her job.

Jury and Witness Leave

Each person employed by the Sumter County School System shall be allowed leave with pay for the purposes of serving as a juror in any court or when subpoenaed to testify in a case arising out of the individual’s duties as an employee. Jury and/or witness leave shall not be deducted from an individual’s accumulated personal, professional, or sick leave. No employee utilizing jury or witness leave shall be required to pay the cost of employing a substitute teacher to serve during his or her absence for jury or witness leave. Employees who serve on juries or who are subpoenaed to testify in cases arising out of their duties as employees must remit to the Board of Education any jury/witness pay they receive.

Military Leave

All employees of the Board of Education are entitled to paid leave not to exceed eighteen days in any one federal fiscal year for the purpose of complying with ordered military duty with the armed forces of the United States or State of Georgia, including duty as a voluntary member of the National Guard or any reserve component of the United States or State of Georgia. In the event the Governor declares an emergency that results in an employee being ordered to military duty as a member of the National Guard, the employee is entitled to leave not exceeding thirty days in any one federal fiscal year. Employees who have military commitments shall inform the Superintendent or designee annually and shall cooperate to the extent possible in scheduling such leave so as to minimize the disruption in those employees' duties and the mission of the Board of Education.

Disclaimer

To the extent that any provision in this policy conflicts with or is superseded by the *Family and Medical Leave Act* (“FMLA”), the regulations promulgated there under, or any other state or federal law, the provisions of the applicable law or its regulations or other law, as the case may be, shall control.

VACATION FOR 12-MONTH EMPLOYEES

All twelve month employees entering our system will receive two weeks vacation. Vacation will be earned at a rate of .83333 day per month for the first calendar year of employment. That rate will continue each month until the employee reaches first July 1st after a year of employment. On July 1st the employee will earn 10 days of vacation.

Example: An employee that is hired November 1, 2005 would accrue .83333 for each month until July 1, 2007. A total of 19 months with accrued or used vacation of 15.83 days. At that the employee would no longer accrue days but would receive 10 days vacation beginning each July 1st.

Employees may accrue a maximum of thirty days of vacation. No vacation can be earned beyond thirty days.

Vacation schedules for eligible employees are to be approved by the employee's immediate supervisor. Employees should try to plan vacation during the vacation season.

ATTENDANCE

As an educator, it is important to offer a seamless uninterrupted education to our students. A teacher's presence in the classroom is vital in receiving an effective education.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

All substitute teachers must complete State-mandated training (part of the training is waived if the substitute has a valid teaching or paraprofessional certificate), submit to a background check and be approved by the Board of Education before being used as a substitute. A list of approved substitute teachers is compiled by the central office and is forwarded to the principals. Long term substitutes approved by the board will be added to the sub list automatically. Board Policy requires that Substitute teachers be selected from the approved list ([Click here to view Board Policy GBRJ](#)). Preference may be given to those with certification and/or proven experience. Principals are responsible for seeing that substitute teachers are contacted. The teacher should leave detailed plans for instruction and other duties so that the substitute can be most effective. It is recommended that each teacher have an emergency substitute file in the office with general lesson plans, seating chart(s), bell schedule(s), duty assignments, and a list of classroom rules and procedures along with procedures for reporting problems

ARRANGEMENTS FOR SUBSTITUTES

Due to circumstances such as illness or personal crisis, sometimes being out of the classroom is unavoidable.

Substitute teachers, bus drivers and other personnel will be hired in accordance with state laws and Georgia Department of Education regulations.

Employees should contact his/her immediate supervisor for department level procedures.

Classroom teachers must maintain appropriate emergency plans to be utilized by substitute teachers in the event of an unplanned absence.

BENEFITS

Health, Life, Dental and Other Benefits

The Sumter County School Benefits Department is committed to quality customer service and professionalism. We will strive to keep you updated with the latest payroll/benefits news via our website, as well as sending out pertinent emails for any payroll and benefit changes. Please feel free to call us if you have any questions, concerns, or needs.

For new employees, benefits will begin the first day of the month following your first paycheck. Example: First paycheck issued on July 31st, benefits begin on August 1st.

****For Benefits Information on Ameritas Dental and Vision go to: employeenavigator.com. .**

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Georgia

www.Anthem.com

1-855-641-4862 8am-8pm ET Monday- Friday

Wellness- Sharecare

www.BeWellSHBP.com

1-888-616-6411 8am-8pm ET Monday- Friday

Pharmacy - CVS Caremark

1-844-345-3241 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week

Pharmacy Help Desk

1-800-364-6331

SHBP Call Center- To declare any QUALIFYING event (marriage, birth, divorce, loss of coverage for spouse/kids) -31 days of Qualifying Event

www.shbp.georgia.gov

1-800-610-1863 8:30am-5pm ET Monday- Friday

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid

www.medicare.gov

1-800-633-4227 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week

TRICARE

www.asicorporation.com/ga_shbp

1-866-637-9911

Federal law has changed and now allows the Peachcare for Kids program to enroll children of members covered under SHBP.

Peachcare for Kids

www.peachcare.org

1-877-427-3224

PAYROLL FAQ

When do I get paid?

- Pay day is the last working day of the month.
- The holiday seasons such as Thanksgiving and Christmas will allow for early checks. This exception pay day will be announced prior to the holiday.

Does the Sumter County School System participate in Social Security?

- Yes, Sumter County School System participates in Social Security. Employee contributions are 7.65%.

When will I receive my first paycheck?

- If you are transferring here in a 190 day position and will receive a final pay in August from a prior system, you will receive your first check in Sumter County September 30th.
- If you are from another state or a first year employee, your annual salary will be divided by 13 months to receive your first check August 31st.

Where do I pick up my check?

- Checks may be picked up at the location where you work.
- Direct deposit is available and your check stub may also be picked up at your school on pay day.
- Checks will be mailed during summer break.
- Please be sure to keep updated address information with the payroll department.

When will I receive my last check for the school year?

- If you work through the last date of your contract, the chart below will show the last pay.
 - 10 month employees last pay – 8/31
 - 11 month employee last pay – 7/31
 - 12 month employee last pay – 6/30

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (GBRIG)

It is the purpose of this policy to set out in summary form the provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act ("the Act" or "FMLA") and its implementing regulations. The Board of Education ("Board") does not intend by this policy to create any additional rights to leave not provided by the Act; provided, however, the Board does wish to extend the rights of the Act to certain employees who have worked at least 12 months for the Board. The Board does intend to elect certain options as the Act authorizes. Any portion of this policy inconsistent or contrary to the Act is unintentional and shall not be given effect. As to the interpretation of this policy, the Board's employees should look to the Act itself and its regulations.

A. ELIGIBLE EMPLOYEES

Employees of the Board who have been employed by the Board for at least 12 months and who have worked at least 1250 hours during the 12 month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave are eligible to take unpaid leave under the FMLA.

B. DEFINITIONS

"Covered Active Duty" means, for members of the Armed Forces, duty during deployment to a foreign country; for members of a Reserves component of the armed Forces, duty during deployment to a foreign country under a call or order to active duty pursuant to federal law."

"Covered Service member" (for qualifying exigency leave) means the employee's spouse, child or parent under a federal call or order to cover active duty.

"Covered Service member" (for military caregiver leave) means the employee's spouse, child, parent or next of kin who is (1) current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness or (2) a veteran who was a member of the Armed Forces at any time during the five years preceding the date on which the veteran undergoes any medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy.

"Instructional employee" means an employee whose principal function is to teach and instruct students in a class, a small group, or an individual setting.

"Next of Kin" of a covered service member means the nearest blood relative other than the covered service member's spouse, parent, son or daughter, in the following order of priority: blood relatives granted legal custody, brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and first cousins, unless the covered service member has specifically designated in writing another blood relative for purposes of FMLA caregiver leave.

"Outpatient Status," with respect to a covered service member, means the status of a member of the Armed Forces assigned to either a military medical treatment facility as an outpatient; or a unit established for the purpose of providing command and control of members of the Armed Forces receiving medical care as outpatients.

"Parent" means a biological, adoptive, step or foster mother or father or one who acted in place of a parent when the employee was a child. The term "parent" does not include parent "in law."

"Parent of covered service member" means a biological, adoptive, step or foster parent or any other individual who acted in place of a parent of the covered service member. The term does not include parents "in law."

"Serious Health Condition" means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care requiring an overnight stay in a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility or continuing treatment by a health care provider, all as further defined in the FMLA regulations.

"Serious Injury or Illness" means, an injury or illness incurred by a covered service member in the line of duty on active duty (or that existed before active duty and was aggravated by line of duty service) that may render the service member medically unfit to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank, or rating. In the case of a veteran, "serious injury or illness" means a qualifying injury or illness, as defined by the Secretary of labor, incurred during or aggravated by active duty during the five years before undergoing treatment, recuperation, or therapy, and that manifested itself before or after the member became a veteran.

"Son or daughter" means a biological, adopted or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee acts as a parent. The son or daughter must be under age 18 or, if the son or daughter is age 18 or older, he/she must be incapable of self-care due to a mental or physical disability at the time FMLA leave is to begin.

"Son or daughter of a covered service member" means a covered service member's biological, adopted, or foster child, stepchild, legal ward, or a child for whom the covered service member acted in the place of a parent, and who is of any age.

"Spouse" means a husband or wife as defined or recognized under Georgia law.

C. AMOUNT AND TYPE OF LEAVE TAKEN

An eligible employee may request leave for one or more of the following reasons:

Birth of a son or daughter and to care for the newborn child;

Adoption or foster placement with the employee of a son or daughter and to care for the newly placed child;

To care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter or parent, if that person has a serious health condition;

Serious health condition of the employee that prevents the employee from performing his/her job functions;

Any qualifying exigency arising from the fact that the employee's family member (the covered service member) is on covered active duty. Qualifying exigencies are defined as short-notice deployment (seven or less calendar days); military events and related activities; childcare and school activities; financial and legal arrangements; counseling; rest and recuperation (up to five days per instance); post-deployment activities; additional activities where the employer and employee agree that the leave is an exigency and agree to both timing and duration of the leave; and

Military caregiver leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the employee is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin of the service member.

In the event of the birth, adoption or foster placement of a son or daughter, all leave must be completed within twelve months after the birth, adoption or foster placement.

Except as provided below, an employee may take up to a total of 12 weeks leave during any twelve-month period. A "rolling year" shall be used to determine the twelve-month period during which the leave entitlement may occur. That is, each time an employee takes FMLA leave, the remaining leave entitlement would be any balance of the number of weeks that has not been used during the immediately preceding 12 months. See 29 C.F.R. § 825.200(b)(4).

If both spouses work for the District and both are eligible for FMLA leave, they are authorized to take only a combined total of 12 weeks leave during any one 12 month period to care for a newborn or adopted child, a child

placed with the employee for foster care, or a parent with a serious health condition. Both spouses are authorized to take leave for twelve (12) weeks to care for a spouse or child with a serious health condition.

An eligible employee is eligible to take up to 26 weeks of military caregiver leave during a “single 12-month period.” The “single 12-month period” begins on the date the employee first takes military caregiver leave and ends 12 months after that date, regardless of the method used to determine the leave entitlement period for other FMLA reasons.

If both spouses work for the District and both are eligible for FMLA leave, they are authorized to take only a combined total of 26 weeks during the “single 12-month period” described above for military caregiver leave or a combination of military caregiver leave and leave taken for other FMLA reasons.

The District will require that any accrued paid leave (sick, personal, vacation, or any other paid leave) be substituted for all or a part of the otherwise unpaid FMLA leave under the terms and conditions of the District’s normal leave policies. Because leave pursuant to an employee’s disability benefit plan or workers’ compensation absence is not unpaid, the provision for substitution of accrued paid leave is not applicable in such cases.

D. INTERMITTENT OR REDUCED LEAVE

An employee may take leave on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule where it is medically necessary due to the serious health condition of a covered family member, the employee, or the serious injury or illness of a covered service member, or when necessary because of a qualifying exigency. The District will require a certification, in the form designated by the District, to document the necessity of such intermittent leave or reduced schedule leave.

E. NOTIFICATION OF LEAVE

If the need for FMLA leave is foreseeable, an employee requesting leave must provide at least 30 days advance notice to the Director of Human Resources. If such advance notice is not possible, the employee must give notice as soon as practicable, which means as soon as both possible and practical, taking into account all of the facts and circumstances in the individual case. If an employee does not provide at least 30 days notice of foreseeable leave, he or she must explain why such notice was not practicable if so requested by the District. When the need for leave is not foreseeable, an employee must provide notice as soon as practicable, which generally should be according to the District’s usual and customary leave requirements. When planning medical treatment, the

employee should make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment, subject to the approval of the health care provider, so that any corresponding leave will not disrupt unduly the operations of the District.

Employees must provide sufficient information for the District to reasonably determine whether the FMLA may apply to the leave request. When an employee seeks leave due to an FMLA-qualifying reason for which the District has previously provided FMLA leave, the employee must specifically reference either the previous qualifying reason for leave or the need for FMLA leave.

F. BENEFITS AND RETURN TO WORK

Employees will be eligible to maintain health care benefits provided by the school district while on FMLA leave. The District will pay the employer's portion, if any, of such benefits. The employee will pay the same portion, if any, of such benefits as the employee paid before beginning the leave.

The District may recover any health care benefit premiums paid on behalf of an employee if the employee does not return to work after the leave period has expired, unless the employee did not return due to a serious health condition of the employee or the employee's spouse, parent or child, or a serious injury or illness of a covered service member or other circumstances beyond the employee's control. The District may require certification from the health care provider that a serious health condition of the employee or family member, or the covered service member's serious injury or illness, prevented the employee from returning to work.

With the exception of paid vacation, personal, sick, or any other paid leave required to be substituted for unpaid leave under Section C above, the employee's absence during leave will not alter benefits which the employee accrued before taking leave. Any accrued benefits will not be lost during the leave.

Upon return from leave, the employee is entitled to be reinstated to a position equivalent to the one the employee held when he/she left on FMLA leave, with equivalent pay, benefits and other terms and conditions of employment. Upon proper notice, however, the District may deny reinstatement under this policy to an employee whose salary is in the highest 10% of the employees employed by the school district if such denial is necessary to prevent substantial and grievous economic injury to the District's operation, as determined by the District.

G. REQUIRED CERTIFICATION AND REPORTING

The District requires that a request for leave due to a serious health condition of an employee or an employee's family member or a serious injury or illness of a covered service member be supported by certification by the appropriate health care provider of the eligible employee or family member on a form to be provided by the District. This certification for a serious health condition must include (1) the name, address, telephone and fax numbers of the healthcare provider and type of practice/specialization; (2) the approximate date on which the serious health condition commenced, and its probable duration; (3) a statement or description of appropriate medical facts regarding the patient's health condition for which FMLA leave is requested; (4) if the purpose of the leave is to care for a family member, a statement that the employee is needed to care for the family member and an estimate of the frequency and duration of the leave required for such care; (5) if the leave is due to the employee's own serious health condition, a statement that the employee is unable to perform his/her essential job functions, the nature of other work restrictions, and the likely duration of such inability; and (6) if intermittent or reduced schedule leave is requested, information sufficient to establish the medical necessity for the same and an estimate of the dates and duration of treatments and any periods of recovery. The employer may require that the eligible employee obtain subsequent recertification on a reasonable basis as requested by the District in accordance with the FMLA regulations.

The District, at its own expense, may obtain the opinion of a second health care provider of the District's choice, if the District should choose to do so. If a conflict exists between the opinion in the certification and the second opinion, the District may, at its own expense, obtain a third opinion from a health care provider upon which the District and the employee jointly agree. Such a third opinion as to the necessity for the leave is binding on both the District and the employee.

Upon an employee's return to work after leave for the employee's own serious health condition, the District may require the employee to obtain certification from his/her health care provider that the employee is able to resume work.

The District may require that a first request for leave because of a qualifying exigency arising from active duty or a call to active duty be supported by a copy of the covered service member's active duty orders or other documentation issued by the military. A certification form requesting the required information to support a request for exigency leave will be provided by the District upon request.

The District may require an employee on FMLA leave to report periodically to his/her principal or supervisor on the employee's status and intent to return to work.

H. SPECIAL PROVISIONS

When an instructional employee seeks intermittent leave or leave on a reduced schedule in connection with a family or personal serious health condition or to care for a covered service member that would constitute at least 20% of the total number of working days during which the leave would extend, the District may require the employee to elect to take leave in a block (not intermittently) for the entire period or to transfer to an available alternative position within the school system that is

equivalent in pay, for which the employee is qualified, and which better accommodates the intermittent situation.

If an instructional employee begins leave more than five weeks before the end of a semester, the District may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the semester if

- (a) the leave will last at least three weeks; and
- (b) the employee would return to work during the three-week period before the end of the term.

If an instructional employee begins leave for a purpose other than the employee's own serious health condition during the five-week period before the end of the semester, the District may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the semester if

- (a) the leave will last more than two weeks; and
- (b) the employee would return to work during the two-week period before the end of the term.

If an instructional employee begins leave for a purpose other than the employee's own serious health condition during the three-week period before the end of a semester, and the leave will last more than five working days, the District may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the semester.

NOTIFICATION OF ANTICIPATED LEAVE

An employee absent from work for more than 3 consecutively scheduled work-days as a result of a non-work related illness or injury must apply for Family and Medical Leave. Except where circumstances are such that reasonable advance planning is not possible, employees must provide their supervisor and the Office of the Superintendent (Human Resources) 30 days' notice of the date when leave is to begin. With respect to foreseeable family or employee illness, the employee shall make reasonable effort to schedule treatment - including intermittent and reduced hour leave - so as not to disrupt unduly the operations of the school district, subject to approval of the employee's or family member's health care provider.

FMLA - EMPLOYEE FORM

Certification of Health Care Provider for Employee's Serious Health Condition (Family and Medical Leave Act)

U.S. Department of Labor Wage and Hour Division



DO NOT SEND COMPLETED FORM TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR; RETURN TO THE PATIENT

OMB Control Number: 1235-0003 Expires: 5/31/2018

SECTION I: For Completion by the EMPLOYER

INSTRUCTIONS to the EMPLOYER: The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides that an employer may require an employee seeking FMLA protections because of a need for leave due to a serious health condition to submit a medical certification issued by the employee's health care provider. Please complete Section I before giving this form to your employee. Your response is voluntary. While you are not required to use this form, you may not ask the employee to provide more information than allowed under the FMLA regulations, 29 C.F.R. §§ 825.306-825.308. Employers must generally maintain records and documents relating to medical certifications, recertifications, or medical histories of employees created for FMLA purposes as confidential medical records in separate files/records from the usual personnel files and in accordance with 29 C.F.R. § 1630.14(c)(1), if the Americans with Disabilities Act applies, and in accordance with 29 C.F.R. § 1635.9, if the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act applies.

Employer name and contact: _____

Employee's job title: _____ Regular work schedule: _____

Employee's essential job functions: _____

Check if job description is attached: _____

SECTION II: For Completion by the EMPLOYEE

INSTRUCTIONS to the EMPLOYEE: Please complete Section II before giving this form to your medical provider. The FMLA permits an employer to require that you submit a timely, complete, and sufficient medical certification to support a request for FMLA leave due to your own serious health condition. If requested by your employer, your response is required to obtain or retain the benefit of FMLA protections. 29 U.S.C. §§ 2613, 2614(c)(3). Failure to provide a complete and sufficient medical certification may result in a denial of your FMLA request. 29 C.F.R. § 825.313. Your employer must give you at least 15 calendar days to return this form. 29 C.F.R. § 825.305(b).

Your name: _____
First Middle Last

SECTION III: For Completion by the HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

INSTRUCTIONS to the HEALTH CARE PROVIDER: Your patient has requested leave under the FMLA. Answer, fully and completely, all applicable parts. Several questions seek a response as to the frequency or duration of a condition, treatment, etc. Your answer should be your best estimate based upon your medical knowledge, experience, and examination of the patient. Be as specific as you can; terms such as "lifetime," "unknown," or "indeterminate" may not be sufficient to determine FMLA coverage. Limit your responses to the condition for which the employee is seeking leave. Do not provide information about genetic tests, as defined in 29 C.F.R. § 1635.3(f), genetic services, as defined in 29 C.F.R. § 1635.3(e), or the manifestation of disease or disorder in the employee's family members, 29 C.F.R. § 1635.3(b). Please be sure to sign the form on the last page.

Provider's name and business address: _____

Type of practice / Medical specialty: _____

Telephone: () _____ Fax: () _____

PART A: MEDICAL FACTS

1. Approximate date condition commenced: _____

Probable duration of condition: _____

Mark below as applicable:

Was the patient admitted for an overnight stay in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility?

No Yes. If so, dates of admission: _____

Date(s) you treated the patient for condition: _____

Will the patient need to have treatment visits at least twice per year due to the condition? No Yes.

Was medication, other than over-the-counter medication, prescribed? No Yes.

Was the patient referred to other health care provider(s) for evaluation or treatment (e.g., physical therapist)?
 No Yes. If so, state the nature of such treatments and expected duration of treatment: _____

2. Is the medical condition pregnancy? No Yes. If so, expected delivery date: _____

3. Use the information provided by the employer in Section I to answer this question. If the employer fails to provide a list of the employee's essential functions or a job description, answer these questions based upon the employee's own description of his/her job functions.

Is the employee unable to perform any of his/her job functions due to the condition: No Yes.

If so, identify the job functions the employee is unable to perform: _____

4. Describe other relevant medical facts, if any, related to the condition for which the employee seeks leave (such medical facts may include symptoms, diagnosis, or any regimen of continuing treatment such as the use of specialized equipment):

PART B: AMOUNT OF LEAVE NEEDED

5. Will the employee be incapacitated for a single continuous period of time due to his/her medical condition, including any time for treatment and recovery? No Yes.

If so, estimate the beginning and ending dates for the period of incapacity: _____

6. Will the employee need to attend follow-up treatment appointments or work part-time or on a reduced schedule because of the employee's medical condition? No Yes.

If so, are the treatments or the reduced number of hours of work medically necessary?
 No Yes.

Estimate treatment schedule, if any, including the dates of any scheduled appointments and the time required for each appointment, including any recovery period:

Estimate the part-time or reduced work schedule the employee needs, if any:

_____ hour(s) per day; _____ days per week from _____ through _____

7. Will the condition cause episodic flare-ups periodically preventing the employee from performing his/her job functions? No Yes.

Is it medically necessary for the employee to be absent from work during the flare-ups?
 No Yes. If so, explain:

Based upon the patient's medical history and your knowledge of the medical condition, estimate the frequency of flare-ups and the duration of related incapacity that the patient may have over the next 6 months (e.g., 1 episode every 3 months lasting 1-2 days):

Frequency : _____ times per _____ week(s) _____ month(s)

Duration: _____ hours or _____ day(s) per episode

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: IDENTIFY QUESTION NUMBER WITH YOUR ADDITIONAL ANSWER.

Signature of Health Care Provider

Date

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT NOTICE AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT

If submitted, it is mandatory for employers to retain a copy of this disclosure in their records for three years. 29 U.S.C. § 2616; 29 C.F.R. § 825.500. Persons are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The Department of Labor estimates that it will take an average of 20 minutes for respondents to complete this collection of information, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. If you have any comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, send them to the Administrator, Wage and Hour Division, U.S. Department of Labor, Room S-3502, 200 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20210. **DO NOT SEND COMPLETED FORM TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR; RETURN TO THE PATIENT.**

FMLA - FAMILY MEMBER

Certification of Health Care Provider for
Family Member's Serious Health Condition
(Family and Medical Leave Act)

U.S. Department of Labor
Wage and Hour Division



DO NOT SEND COMPLETED FORM TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR; RETURN TO THE PATIENT.

OMB Control Number: 1235-0003
Expires: 3/31/2018

SECTION I: For Completion by the EMPLOYER

INSTRUCTIONS to the EMPLOYER: The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides that an employer may require an employee seeking FMLA protections because of a need for leave to care for a covered family member with a serious health condition to submit a medical certification issued by the health care provider of the covered family member. Please complete Section I before giving this form to your employee. Your response is voluntary. While you are not required to use this form, you may not ask the employee to provide more information than allowed under the FMLA regulations, 29 C.F.R. §§ 825.306-825.308. Employers must generally maintain records and documents relating to medical certifications, recertifications, or medical histories of employees' family members, created for FMLA purposes as confidential medical records in separate files/records from the usual personnel files and in accordance with 29 C.F.R. § 1630.14(c)(1), if the Americans with Disabilities Act applies, and in accordance with 29 C.F.R. § 1635.9, if the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act applies.

Employer name and contact: _____

SECTION II: For Completion by the EMPLOYEE

INSTRUCTIONS to the EMPLOYEE: Please complete Section II before giving this form to your family member or his/her medical provider. The FMLA permits an employer to require that you submit a timely, complete, and sufficient medical certification to support a request for FMLA leave to care for a covered family member with a serious health condition. If requested by your employer, your response is required to obtain or retain the benefit of FMLA protections. 29 U.S.C. §§ 2613, 2614(c)(3). Failure to provide a complete and sufficient medical certification may result in a denial of your FMLA request. 29 C.F.R. § 825.313. Your employer must give you at least 15 calendar days to return this form to your employer. 29 C.F.R. § 825.305.

Your name: _____
 First Middle Last

Name of family member for whom you will provide care: _____
 First Middle Last

Relationship of family member to you: _____

If family member is your son or daughter, date of birth: _____

Describe care you will provide to your family member and estimate leave needed to provide care:

Employee Signature _____ Date _____

SECTION III: For Completion by the HEALTH CARE PROVIDER

INSTRUCTIONS to the HEALTH CARE PROVIDER: The employee listed above has requested leave under the FMLA to care for your patient. Answer, fully and completely, all applicable parts below. Several questions seek a response as to the frequency or duration of a condition, treatment, etc. Your answer should be your best estimate based upon your medical knowledge, experience, and examination of the patient. Be as specific as you can; terms such as "lifetime," "unknown," or "indeterminate" may not be sufficient to determine FMLA coverage. Limit your responses to the condition for which the patient needs leave. Do not provide information about genetic tests, as defined in 29 C.F.R. § 1635.3(f), or genetic services, as defined in 29 C.F.R. § 1635.3(e). Page 3 provides space for additional information, should you need it. Please be sure to sign the form on the last page.

Provider's name and business address: _____

Type of practice / Medical specialty: _____

Telephone: (_____) _____ Fax: (_____) _____

PART A: MEDICAL FACTS

1. Approximate date condition commenced: _____

Probable duration of condition: _____

Was the patient admitted for an overnight stay in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility?
 No Yes. If so, dates of admission: _____

Date(s) you treated the patient for condition: _____

Was medication, other than over-the-counter medication, prescribed? No Yes.

Will the patient need to have treatment visits at least twice per year due to the condition? No Yes

Was the patient referred to other health care provider(s) for evaluation or treatment (e.g., physical therapist)?
 No Yes. If so, state the nature of such treatments and expected duration of treatment:

2. Is the medical condition pregnancy? No Yes. If so, expected delivery date: _____

3. Describe other relevant medical facts, if any, related to the condition for which the patient needs care (such medical facts may include symptoms, diagnosis, or any regimen of continuing treatment such as the use of specialized equipment):

PART B: AMOUNT OF CARE NEEDED: When answering these questions, keep in mind that your patient's need for care by the employee seeking leave may include assistance with basic medical, hygienic, nutritional, safety or transportation needs, or the provision of physical or psychological care:

4. Will the patient be incapacitated for a single continuous period of time, including any time for treatment and recovery? No Yes.

Estimate the beginning and ending dates for the period of incapacity: _____

During this time, will the patient need care? No Yes.

Explain the care needed by the patient and why such care is medically necessary:

5. Will the patient require follow-up treatments, including any time for recovery? No Yes.

Estimate treatment schedule, if any, including the dates of any scheduled appointments and the time required for each appointment, including any recovery period:

Explain the care needed by the patient, and why such care is medically necessary: _____

6. Will the patient require care on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis, including any time for recovery? No Yes.

Estimate the hours the patient needs care on an intermittent basis, if any:

_____ hour(s) per day; _____ days per week from _____ through _____

Explain the care needed by the patient, and why such care is medically necessary:

7. Will the condition cause episodic flare-ups periodically preventing the patient from participating in normal daily activities? No Yes.

Based upon the patient's medical history and your knowledge of the medical condition, estimate the frequency of flare-ups and the duration of related incapacity that the patient may have over the next 6 months (e.g., 1 episode every 3 months lasting 1-2 days):

Frequency: _____ times per _____ week(s) _____ month(s)

Duration: _____ hours or _____ day(s) per episode

Does the patient need care during these flare-ups? No Yes.

Explain the care needed by the patient, and why such care is medically necessary: _____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: IDENTIFY QUESTION NUMBER WITH YOUR ADDITIONAL ANSWER.

Signature of Health Care Provider

Date

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT NOTICE AND PUBLIC BURDEN STATEMENT

If submitted, it is mandatory for employers to retain a copy of this disclosure in their records for three years. 29 U.S.C. § 2616; 29 C.F.R. § 825.500. Persons are not required to respond to this collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The Department of Labor estimates that it will take an average of 20 minutes for respondents to complete this collection of information, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. If you have any comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, send them to the Administrator, Wage and Hour Division, U.S. Department of Labor, Room S-3502, 200 Constitution Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20210. **DO NOT SEND COMPLETED FORM TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR; RETURN TO THE PATIENT.**

PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

The Sumter County Board of Education shall make paid parental leave equally available to all eligible employees of the Board of Education under the following terms:

1. An employee of the Board of Education shall be eligible for paid parental leave for qualifying life events upon satisfying the following criteria:
 - a. The employee is classified as full-time by the District and is eligible to participate in the TRS (Teacher Retirement System of Georgia) or the PSERS (Public School Employees Retirement System); and
 - b. The employee has six continuous months of employment with the Board, regardless of whether he or she is eligible for paid or unpaid leave under federal law. An employee paid on an hourly basis must have worked a minimum of 700 hours over the six-month period immediately preceding the requested paid parental leave date.

2. A qualifying life event means:
 - a. The birth of a child of an eligible employee;
 - b. The placement of a minor child for adoption with an eligible employee; or
 - c. The placement of a minor child for foster care with an eligible employee.

3. The maximum amount of paid parental leave that may be taken by an eligible employee during a rolling 12 month period is 120 hours, regardless of the number of qualifying life events that occur during such period.
 - a. The rolling 12 month period shall be measured backward from the date an eligible employee first uses parental leave.
 - b. Parental leave may be taken as needed and may be taken in increments of less than eight hours. The smallest increment of parental leave that may be taken is 2 hours.
 - c. Any unused paid parental leave that remains 12 months after the qualifying event shall not carry over for future use.
 - d. Unused paid parental leave shall have no cash value at any time of the eligible employee's separation from employment with the Board of Education.

4. Paid parental leave under state law shall run concurrently with any leave provided under federal law.



Request for Georgia Paid Parental Leave

Sumter County Schools - Human Resources Department

Phone 229-931-8502 Fax: 229-931-8547

Employee Information	
Name:	Last 4 digits of S#:
Position:	Location:
Hire Date:	Contact#:
If you are married, is your spouse employed by Sumter County School? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, last 4 digits of spouse SS#: _____	
Type of Leave Request	
<input type="checkbox"/> Birth of a Child	
<input type="checkbox"/> Placement of a minor child for adoption	
<input type="checkbox"/> Placement of a minor child for foster care	
Amount of Leave Requesting	
I am requesting the GA Paid Parental Leave (GPPL) be granted for the following period of time:	
Date Leave Begins:	Date Leave Ends
Last Date Worked:	Anticipated Return to Work Date:
Are you requesting increments leave? ? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Have you taken a leave of absence under this policy during the preceding 12 months? ? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
If yes, provide date from: _____ date to: _____	
Reason for leave: _____	
Acknowledgement	
I understand that verification/certification from a certified health care provider and/or Department of Family & Children Services organization addressing my reason for the leave request must be submitted to the Human Resources Department within 30 days. I also understand that the certification must include the following:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confirmation/Verification of birth and/or placement of a minor child for adoption or foster care 2. The beginning and estimated ending date of employee's need for leave 3. Health care provider's signature AND/OR Department of Family & Children Services Case Manager/Authorized Official 	
I have read the Georgia Paid Parental Leave policy, and I agree to abide by its requirements. My signature affirms that I have been truthful in my request for GAPPL leave. I understand that falsification of information may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.	
I understand that a failure to return to work at the end of my leave period may be treated as a resignation unless an extension has been agreed upon and approved in writing.	
Employee's Signature:	Date:
Principal/Supervisor Signature:	Date:
Request must be submitted to the Human Resources Department upon approval/signature of principal/supervisor.	

HARASSMENT (JCAC)

It is the policy of this School District to prohibit any act of harassment of students by other students or employees based upon race, color, national origin, sex, or disability at all times and during all occasions while at school, in the workplace or at any school event or activity. Any such act by a student or employee shall result in prompt and appropriate discipline, including the possible termination of employment or suspension or expulsion of the student.

Sexual harassment may include conduct or speech which entails unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, taunts, threats, comments of a vulgar or demeaning nature, demands or physical contact which creates a hostile environment. There may be other speech or conduct which employees or students experience as inappropriate or illegal harassment which should also be reported; harassment can take many forms and it is not possible to itemize every aspect of the harassment forbidden by this policy.

Any student, parent, employee, or other individual who believes that a student has been subjected to harassment or discrimination by other students or employees of the School District as prohibited by this policy should promptly report the same to the principal of their school or to the appropriate coordinator designated in policy JAA, who will implement the board's discriminatory complaints procedures as specified in that policy. Students may also report harassment or discrimination to their school counselor or any administrator. Students and employees will not be subjected to retaliation for reporting such harassment or discrimination. If at any point in the investigation of reported sexual harassment of a student, the coordinator or designee determines that the reported harassment should more properly be termed abuse, the reported incident or situation shall be referred pursuant to the established protocol for child abuse investigation.

It is the duty of all employees to promptly report harassment forbidden by this policy. All supervisors will instruct their subordinates as to the content of this policy and, through appropriate professional learning activities, enlighten employees as to the varied forms or expression of prohibited harassment. The principals of all schools shall ensure that students and parents are informed through student handbooks and verbally that such harassment is strictly forbidden, how it is to be reported and the consequences for violating this policy.

CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS

Effective January 1, 2023

505-6-.01 THE CODE OF ETHICS FOR EDUCATORS

(1) **Introduction.** The Code of Ethics for Educators defines the professional behavior of educators in Georgia and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) has adopted standards that represent the conduct generally accepted by the education profession. The code defines unethical conduct justifying disciplinary sanction and provides guidance for protecting the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators, and assuring the citizens of Georgia a degree of accountability within the education profession.

(2) Definitions.

- (a) "Breach of contract" occurs when an educator fails to honor a signed contract for employment with a school/school system by resigning in a manner that does not meet the guidelines established by the GaPSC.
- (b) "Certificate" refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate, license, or permit issued by authority of the GaPSC.
- (c) "Child endangerment" occurs when an educator disregards a substantial and/or unjustifiable risk of bodily harm to the student.
- (d) "Complaint" is any written and signed statement from a local board, the state board, or one or more individual residents of this state filed with the GaPSC alleging that an educator has breached one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators. A "complaint" will be deemed a request to investigate.
- (e) "Educator" is a teacher, school or school system administrator, or other education personnel who holds a certificate issued by the GaPSC and persons who have applied for but have not yet received a certificate. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics for Educators, "educator" also refers to paraprofessionals, aides, and substitute teachers.
- (f) "Inappropriate" is conduct or communication not suitable for an educator to have with a student; it goes beyond the bounds of an educator-student relationship.
- (g) "Physical abuse" is physical interaction resulting in a reported or visible bruise or injury to the student.
- (h) "Student" is any individual enrolled in the state's public, or private schools from preschool through grade 12 or any individual under the age of 18. For the purposes of the Code of Ethics for Educators, the enrollment period for a graduating student ends on August 31 of the school year of graduation.

(3) Standards.

- (a) **Standard 1: Legal Compliance** - An educator shall abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to the commission or conviction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude; of any other criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, trafficking, sale, or possession of a controlled substance or marijuana as provided for in Chapter 13 of Title 16; or of any other sexual offense as provided for in Code Section 16-6-1 through 16-6-17, 16-6-20, 16-6-22.2, or 16-12-100; or any other laws applicable to the profession. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of not contedere, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought; a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted; and a situation where an adjudication of guilt or sentence was otherwise withheld or

not entered on the charge or the charge was otherwise disposed of in a similar manner in any jurisdiction.

- (b) **Standard 2: Conduct with Students** - An educator shall always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:
1. Committing any act of child abuse, including physical and verbal abuse;
 2. Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment;
 3. Committing any sexual act with a student or soliciting such from a student;
 4. Engaging in or permitting harassment of or misconduct toward a student;
 5. Soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, electronic, or physical relationship with a student;
 6. Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student; or
 7. Failing to prevent the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs by students under the educator's supervision (including but not limited to at the educator's residence or any other private setting).
- (c) **Standard 3: Alcohol or Drugs** - An educator shall refrain from the use of alcohol or illegal or unauthorized drugs during the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:
1. Being on school or Local Unit of Administration (LUA)/school district premises or at a school or a LUA/school district-related activity while under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs; and
 2. Being on school or LUA/school district premises or at a school-related activity involving students while under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcohol. A school-related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity sponsored by the school or school system (booster clubs, parent-teacher organizations, or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum i.e. Foreign Language trips, etc).
 - (i) For the purposes of this standard, an educator shall be considered "under the influence" if the educator exhibits one or more of the following indicators, including but not limited to: slurred speech, enlarged pupils, bloodshot eyes, general personality changes, lack of physical coordination, poor motor skills, memory problems, concentration problems, etc.
- (d) **Standard 4: Honesty** - An educator shall exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to, falsifying, misrepresenting, or omitting:
1. Professional qualifications, criminal history, college or staff development credit and/or degrees, academic award, and employment history;
 2. Information submitted to federal, state, local school districts and other governmental agencies;

3. Information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel;
 4. Reasons for absences or leaves;
 5. Information submitted in the course of an official inquiry/investigation; and
 6. Information submitted in the course of professional practice.
- (e) Standard 5: **Public Funds and Property** - An educator entrusted with public funds and property shall honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:
1. Misusing public or school-related funds;
 2. Failing to account for funds collected from students or parents;
 3. Submitting fraudulent requests or documentation for reimbursement of expenses or for pay (including fraudulent or purchased degrees, documents, or coursework);
 4. Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts; and
 5. Using school or school district property without the approval of the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee.
- (f) Standard 6: **Remunerative Conduct** - An educator shall maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:
1. Soliciting students or parents of students, or school or LUA/school district personnel, to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee;
 2. Accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there may be the appearance of a conflict of interest;
 3. Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee; and
 4. Coaching, instructing, promoting athletic camps, summer leagues, etc. that involves students in an educator's school system and from whom the educator receives remuneration unless approved by the local board of education/governing board or authorized designee. These types of activities must be in compliance with all rules and regulations of the Georgia High School Association.
- (g) Standard 7: **Confidential Information** - An educator shall comply with state and federal laws and state school board policies relating to the confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material and other information. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:
1. Sharing of confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information, family status and/or income, and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law;

2. Sharing of confidential information restricted by state or federal law;
 3. Violation of confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, violating local school system or state directions for the use of tests or test items, etc.; and
 4. Violation of other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.
- (h) **Standard 8: Required Reports** - An educator shall file with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission reports of a breach of one or more of the standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators, child abuse (O.C.G.A. §19-7-5), or any other required report. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:
1. Failure to report to the GaPSC all requested information on documents required by the Commission when applying for or renewing any certificate with the Commission;
 2. Failure to make a required report of a an alleged or proven violation of one or more standards of the Code of Ethics for educators of which they have personal knowledge as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner; and
 3. Failure to make a required report of any alleged or proven violation of state or federal law as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. These reports include but are not limited to: murder, voluntary manslaughter, aggravated assault, aggravated battery, kidnapping, any sexual offense, any sexual exploitation of a minor, any offense involving a controlled substance and any abuse of a child if an educator has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused.
- (i) **Standard 9: Professional Conduct** - An educator shall demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards and preserves the dignity and integrity of the education profession. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to a resignation that would equate to a breach of contract; any conduct that impairs and/or diminishes the certificate holder's ability to function professionally in his or her employment position; or behavior or conduct that is detrimental to the health, welfare, discipline, or morals of students; or failure to supervise a student(s).
- (j) **Standard 10: Testing** - An educator shall administer state-mandated assessments fairly and ethically. Unethical conduct includes but is not limited to:
1. Committing any act that breaches Test Security; and
 2. Compromising the integrity of the assessment.
- (4) Reporting.**
- (a) Educators are required to report a breach of one or more of the Standards in the Code of Ethics for Educators as soon as possible but no later than ninety (90) days from the date the educator became aware of an alleged breach unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. Educators should be aware of legal requirements and local policies and procedures for

reporting unethical conduct. Complaints filed with the GaPSC must be in writing and must be signed by the complainant (parent, educator, or other LUA/school district employee, etc.).

- (b) The Commission notifies local and state officials of all disciplinary actions. In addition, suspensions and revocations are reported to national officials, including the NASDTEC Clearinghouse.

(5) Disciplinary Action.

- (a) The GaPSC is authorized to suspend, revoke, or deny certificates, to issue a reprimand or warning, or to monitor the educator's conduct and performance after an investigation is held and notice and opportunity for a hearing are provided to the certificate holder. Any of the following grounds shall be considered cause for disciplinary action against the educator:
 1. Unethical conduct as outlined in The Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-10 (GaPSC Rule 505-6-.01);
 2. Disciplinary action against a certificate on grounds consistent with those specified in the Code of Ethics for Educators, Standards 1-10 (GaPSC Rule 505-6-.01);
 3. Order from a court of competent jurisdiction or a request from the Department of Human Resources that the certificate should be suspended or the application for certification should be denied for non-payment of child support (O.C.G.A. §19-6-28.1 and §19-11-9.3);
 4. Suspension or revocation of any professional license or certificate;
 5. Violation of any other laws and rules applicable to the profession (O.C.G.A. §16-13-111); and
 6. Any other good and sufficient cause that renders an educator unfit for employment as an educator.
- (b) An individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended may not serve as a volunteer or be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, substitute teacher or, in any other position during the period of his or her revocation, suspension or denial for a violation of The Code of Ethics. The superintendent and the educator designated by the superintendent/Local Board of Education shall be responsible for assuring that an individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended is not employed or serving in any capacity in their district. Both the superintendent and the superintendent's designee must hold GaPSC certification. Should the superintendent's certificate be revoked, suspended, or denied, the Board of Education shall be responsible for assuring that the superintendent whose certificate has been revoked, suspended, or denied is not employed or serving in any capacity in their district.
- (c) The GaPSC is authorized to determine no probable cause as provided in O.C.G.A. § 20-2-984.4(e) and § 20-2-984.5(e) if:
 1. After a preliminary investigation is concluded it is unlikely that there exists a preponderance of the evidence necessary to prove at a hearing that a violation occurred; or
 2. After a hearing the administrative law judge makes a determination that there is not a preponderance of the evidence necessary to prove that a violation occurred.

- (d) The GaPSC is authorized to determine no further action is necessary pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-984.5(a) if after review of the report of the preliminary investigation, sanctions should not be imposed.
- (6) Sanctions.
 - (a) As outlined in O.C.G.A. 20-2-984.5(c), the GaPSC has the discretion to issue a probable cause sanction against an educator. Common violations and associated sanctions can be found in the accompanying [GaPSC Guidance](#).
 1. Denial is the refusal to grant initial certification to an applicant for a certificate;
 2. Monitoring is the quarterly appraisal of the educator's conduct by the GaPSC through contact with the educator and his or her employer. As a condition of monitoring, an educator may be required to submit *periodic* criminal background check (GCIC). The Commission specifies the length of the monitoring period;
 3. Reprimand admonishes the certificate holder for his or her conduct. The reprimand cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action;
 4. Revocation is the permanent invalidation of any certificate held by the educator. A Voluntary Surrender is equivalent to and has the same effect as a revocation. A Voluntary Surrender shall *be accepted and* becomes effective upon receipt by the GaPSC;
 5. Suspension is the temporary invalidation of any certificate for a period of time specified by the GaPSC; and
 6. Warning informs the certificate holder that his or her conduct is unethical. The warning cautions that further unethical conduct will lead to a more severe action.
- (7) Application Procedures.
 - (a) "Yes" answers to Personal Affirmation Questions (PAQs) require submission of information identified in the accompanying [GaPSC Guidance](#).
 - (b) With respect to an initial applicant, an application and corresponding ethics case that is initiated pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 20-2-984.3(c) will automatically close and be placed on hold if the applicant fails to submit requested documentation to the Ethics Division within 45 days of the request to the applicant. The application will be placed on hold in anticipation of the submission of a new application and the applicant's responding to any requests for documentation in a timely fashion.

Authority O.C.G.A. § 20-2-200

Progressive Discipline Policy

Purpose

Sumter County Schools' progressive discipline policy and procedures are designed to provide a structured corrective action process to improve and prevent a recurrence of undesirable employee behavior and performance issues.

Outlined below are the steps of Sumter County Schools' progressive discipline policy and procedures. Sumter County Schools reserves the right to combine or skip steps depending on the facts of each situation and the nature of the offense. Some of the factors that will be considered are whether the offense is repeated despite coaching, counseling or training; the employee's work record; and the impact the conduct and performance issues have on the organization.

Nothing in this policy provides any contractual rights regarding employee discipline or counseling, nor should anything in this policy be read or construed as modifying or altering the employment-at-will relationship between Sumter County Schools and its employees.

Procedure

Step 1: Counseling and verbal warning

Step 1 creates an opportunity for the immediate supervisor to bring attention to the existing performance, conduct or attendance issue. The supervisor should discuss with the employee the nature of the problem or the violation of company policies and procedures. The supervisor is expected to clearly describe expectations and steps the employee must take to improve his or her performance or resolve the problem.

Within five business days, the supervisor will prepare written documentation of the verbal counseling. The employee will be asked to sign this document to demonstrate his or her understanding of the issues and the corrective action.

Step 2: Written warning

The Step 2 written warning involves more-formal documentation of the performance, conduct or attendance issues and consequences.

During Step 2, the immediate supervisor and a district director will meet with the employee to review any additional incidents or information about the performance, conduct or attendance issues as well as any prior relevant corrective action plans. Management will outline the consequences for the employee of his or her continued failure to meet performance or conduct expectations.

A formal performance improvement plan (PIP) requiring the employee's immediate and sustained corrective action will be issued within five business days of a Step 2 meeting. The written warning may also include a statement indicating that the employee may be subject to additional discipline, up to and including termination, if immediate and sustained corrective action is not taken.

Step 3: Suspension and final written warning

Some performance, conduct or safety incidents are so problematic and harmful that the most effective action may be the temporary removal of the employee from the workplace. When immediate action is necessary to ensure the safety of the employee or others, the immediate supervisor may suspend the employee pending the results of an investigation.

Suspensions that are recommended as part of the normal sequence of the progressive discipline policy and procedures are subject to approval from a next-level manager and HR.

Depending on the seriousness of the infraction, the employee may be suspended without pay in full-day increments consistent with federal, state and local wage and hour employment laws. Nonexempt/hourly employees may not substitute or use an accrued paid vacation or sick day in lieu of the unpaid suspension. In compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), unpaid suspension of salaried/exempt employees is reserved for serious workplace safety or conduct issues. HR will provide guidance to ensure that the discipline is administered without jeopardizing the FLSA exemption status.

Pay may be restored to the employee if an investigation of the incident or infraction absolves the employee of wrongdoing.

Step 4: Recommendation for termination of employment

The last and most serious step in the progressive discipline process is a recommendation to terminate employment. Generally, Sumter County Schools will try to exercise the progressive nature of this policy by first providing warnings, issuing a final written warning or suspending the employee from the workplace before proceeding to a recommendation to terminate employment. However, Sumter County Schools reserves the right to combine and skip steps depending on the circumstances of each situation and the nature of the offense. Furthermore, employees may be terminated without prior notice or disciplinary action.

Management's recommendation to terminate employment must be approved by the Superintendent or designate.

Appeals Process

Employees will have the opportunity to present information to dispute information management has used to issue disciplinary action. The purpose of this process is to provide insight into extenuating circumstances that may have contributed to the employee's performance or conduct issues while allowing for an equitable solution.

If the employee does not present this information during any of the step meetings, he or she will have five business days after each of those meetings to present such information.

Performance and Conduct Issues Not Subject to Progressive Discipline

Behavior that is illegal is not subject to progressive discipline and may result in immediate termination. Such behavior may be reported to local law enforcement authorities.

Similarly, theft, substance abuse, intoxication, fighting and other acts of violence at work are also not subject to progressive discipline and may be grounds for immediate termination.

Documentation

The employee will be provided copies of all progressive discipline documentation, including all PIPs. The employee will be asked to sign copies of this documentation attesting to his or her receipt and understanding of the corrective action outlined in these documents.

Copies of these documents will be placed in the employee's official personnel file.

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE (GAMA)

The Board of Education declares that the manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of controlled substances, marijuana and other dangerous drugs in an unlawful manner or being at work under the influence of alcohol, controlled substances, marijuana or other dangerous drugs is a serious threat to the public health, safety and welfare. With this in mind, the Board declares that its work force must be absolutely free of any person who would knowingly manufacture, distribute, sell or possess a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug in an unlawful manner. This prohibition specifically includes, but is not limited to, the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or alcohol in the employee's workplace. This prohibition also includes, but is not limited to, an employee being under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances while on duty.

Any employee who is convicted for the first time, under the laws of this state, the United States, or any other state, of any criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug shall be subject to disciplinary action. At a minimum, such an employee shall be suspended for a period of not less than two months and shall be required to complete, at his or her own expense, a drug abuse treatment and education program licensed under Chapter 5 of Title 26 of the Official Code of Georgia and approved by the board. At a maximum, such an employee may be terminated from his employment with the school system. Any employee who is convicted for a second or subsequent time under the laws of this state, the United States, or any other state, of any criminal offense involving the manufacture, distribution, sale or possession of a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug shall be terminated from his or her employment and shall be ineligible for employment for a period of five years from the most recent date of conviction.

If, prior to an arrest for an offense involving a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug, an employee notifies the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee that the employee illegally uses a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous drug and is receiving or agrees to receive treatment under a drug abuse treatment and education program licensed under Chapter 5 of Title 26 of the Official Code of Georgia and approved by the Board, the employee shall be entitled to maintain his or her employment for up to one year as long as the employee follows the treatment plan. During this period, the employee shall not be separated from employment solely on the basis of the employee's drug dependence, but the employee's work activities may be restructured if practicable to protect persons or property. No statement made by an employee to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee in order to comply with this code section shall be admissible in any civil, administrative or criminal proceeding as evidence against the public employee. The rights granted by this policy shall be available to an employee only once during a five year period and are intended to be and shall be interpreted as being the same as those minimum rights granted pursuant to the Georgia Drug-Free Work Force Act and any subsequent amendments thereof.

As a condition of employment, each employee must abide by the terms of this policy and must notify the Board within five days after any arrest on any drug-related criminal charge and further notify the Board within five days of any conviction of a drug-related offense.

A copy of this policy shall be disseminated to all employees either directly or through employee handbooks.

The Board of Education shall not consider for employment any applicant who has been convicted for the first time of any drug offense as described above for a three month period from the date of conviction nor shall the Board of Education consider any applicant for employment who has been convicted for the second time of any drug offense as described above for a five year period from the most recent date of conviction.

For purposes of this policy, "conviction" refers to any final conviction in a court of competent jurisdiction, specifically including acceptance of a plea of guilty, nolo contendere, or any plea entered under the First Offenders Act of Georgia or any comparable state or federal legislation.

No certified employee or employee with a contract for a definite term shall be subject to suspension or termination pursuant to this policy except in compliance with the provisions of the Fair Dismissal Act of Georgia, Official Code of Georgia Annotated §§ 20-2-940 through 947. This policy is not intended and shall not be interpreted as prohibiting the school system from taking appropriate disciplinary action against any employee where there exists evidence that an employee uses, distributes or sells illegal drugs even though the employee has not been convicted of any criminal offense or where there exists evidence that an employee is under the influence of alcohol while on duty, except that the school system may not use the statement of any employee to the Superintendent requesting treatment as described in this policy.

The school district shall provide such staff development as required by state or federal law to inform employees of the dangers of drug abuse, the availability of employee assistance and drug counseling and treatment and the terms of this policy.



I have received and reviewed the Sumter County Schools Drug-Free Workplace policy.

Name _____

Date _____

Check:	Location:	Position:
	Central Office _____	School Administrator _____
	Sumter Primary _____	Office Staff _____
	Sumter Elementary _____	Transportation _____
	Sumter Intermediate _____	Food Service _____
	Sumter Middle _____	Maintenance _____
	Sumter High School _____	Grounds _____
	IGNITE _____	Custodial _____
		Substitute Teacher _____
		Other (Specify) _____

PROFESSIONAL DRESS CODE

FOR ALL ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS, AND STAFF OF SUMTER COUNTY SCHOOLS

Professionals are expected to dress equal or above the requirements for students in the school board-adopted Sumter County Schools' Dress Code.

All employees are expected to DRESS PROFESSIONALLY. The following are not to be considered as professional attire:

- Denim fabric for pants or skirt
- Skirts above the knee
- Un-hemmed pants or skirts
- Pants or skirts that drag the floor
- Cargo pants
- Low cut or revealing garments
- Tops that reveal the person's mid section when hand are raised
- Crew neck banded tee shirts
- Tank tops
- Sleeveless tops without a cover
- Capri pants that are above middle shin
- Tight fitting clothes
- Flipflops or bedroom slippers
- Sneakers unless medical necessity

EMPLOYEE TOBACCO USE (GAN)

Board Policy	Descriptor Code: GAN
Tobacco-Free Schools Policy for Georgia School Districts	
<p>The Board of Education recognizes that the use of tobacco products is a health, safety and environmental hazard for students, employees, visitors and school facilities.</p> <p>Smoking shall be prohibited at any time in any school building or property owned or leased by the school district, or at any time in any school-owned vehicle, including any school bus by any student, staff member or school visitor. In addition, this prohibition includes the use of other tobacco products and electronic cigarettes and vapor products.</p> <p>This policy shall apply when on duty for the school district, including when employees are directly instructing or supervising students. Direct supervision includes coaching, band directing, acting as a sponsor or advisor of a club or similar school organization and other instructional roles.</p> <p>This prohibition shall include: unlawful use, cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, possession, transportation or importation of any controlled drug or narcotic substance, being under the influence of any controlled drug, narcotic substance, or any mind-altering substance or intoxicant (illegal or legal), specifically including any product with cannabidiol (CBD), whether hemp or cannabis and regardless of the amount of THC in the product or the extent to which it is legal or illegal under state law.</p> <p>School district employees who violate this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.</p> <p>Tobacco Products and Tobacco Use Tobacco products are defined to include cigarettes, candy cigarettes, chewing tobacco, brunts, blunt wraps, pre-wrapped blunt cones & tubes, cigars, cigarillos, bidis, pipes, e-cigarettes, vaping products cigarette packages or smokeless tobacco containers, lighters, ash trays, key chains, t-shirts, coffee mugs, and any other items containing or reasonably resembling tobacco or tobacco products. Tobacco use includes smoking, chewing, dipping, use electronic nicotine delivery systems or other combustible tobacco products.</p> <p>School Grounds and Property School grounds and property means and includes land, school facilities and school vehicles used for the provision of academic, extracurricular programs and administration by the district. School grounds include playgrounds and recreational places. School grounds include that portion of land, school facilities and other facilities owned by municipalities, private entities or other individuals during those times when the school district has exclusive use of a portion of such land, school facilities, or other facilities for the provision of extracurricular programs.</p> <p>Time of Day "Any time" or "at all times" means during normal school and non-school hours - 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.</p>	

Signage

Signs declaring all school grounds and property as tobacco-free will be posted in all school buildings and vehicles. Signs will be posted at all vehicular entrances to school grounds and building entrances, and in all indoor and outdoor athletic facilities.

Enforcement for Students

Consequences for students engaging in the prohibited behavior will be provided in accordance with the school's behavior management plan. Students who violate the school district's tobacco use policy will be referred to the guidance counselor, school nurse, or other health or counseling services for all offenses for screening, information, counseling and referral. All student violators will have access to an Alternative to Suspension (ATS) program. The ATS program will provide up-to-date information on the many consequences of tobacco use, offer techniques that students can use to stop tobacco use at school, and provide referrals to local youth tobacco cessation programs. Parents/guardians will be notified of all violations and actions taken by the school. School may also use community service as part of the consequences. Suspensions will only be used after a student has several prior violations or refused to participate in other outlined measures.

Enforcement for Staff and Visitors

Consequences for employees who violate the tobacco use policy will be in accordance with personnel policies and may include verbal warning, written reprimand, or termination. Visitors using tobacco products will be asked to refrain while on school property or leave the premises. If they refuse, law enforcement officers will be contacted to escort the person off the premises or cite the person for trespassing. In case the person refuses to leave the school property, in the case of a violation within the building of a school, the person is in violation of the Georgia Smoke-free Air Act of 2005 (O.C.G.A. 31-2a-1, et seq.) and the federal Pro-Children's Act (Title X of Public Law 103-227) and subject to a fine. Signage will be prominently posted in all visitors' areas and school staff and officials will communicate policy to visitors upon arrival and infractions.

Enforcement at Outdoor School Sponsored Events on Campus Grounds

All outdoor school sponsored events on campus (ex. Athletic events, meetings or functions by community groups renting school property) must be tobacco free. This policy must be clearly stated in all contracts, correspondence and verbal and written announcements to all attendees and contractors.

Enforcement at School Sponsored Events Off Campus

All indoor and outdoor school sponsored events off campus in venues (ex: rented arenas, stadiums, halls, theaters) must be tobacco free. This policy must be clearly stated in all contracts, correspondence and verbal and written announcements to all attendees and contractors.

Opportunities for Cessation

The administration will identify and offer programs and services for students who are ready to quit tobacco use. The administration will identify and offer programs and services for school staff who use tobacco products to support them in complying with the policy that prohibits tobacco use on school grounds and during school-related events and assisting those staff who are ready to quit smoking or other tobacco use.

Prevention Education

The administration will identify programs or opportunities for students (inside and/or outside of the classroom) to gain a greater understanding of the health hazards of tobacco

use and the impact of tobacco use as it relates to providing a safe, orderly, clean and inviting school environment.

Procedures for Implementation

The policy will go into effect August 11, 2016. The administration will develop a plan for communicating the policy that will include information in student and employee handbooks, announcements at school-sponsored or school-related events, and appropriate signage (as mentioned above) in buildings and around campus. Other methods will be identified for notifying students, employees and parents about this policy. An enforcement plan, which identifies consequences for students, staff and visitors who violate the policy, will be created and communicated to all students, staff and parents.

Enforcement Policy

Enforcement policies for students:

- 1st Offense: Tobacco Education/Alternative to Suspension course is mandatory; parent notification
- 2nd Offense: Tobacco Education/Alternative to Suspension course is mandatory; parent Notification
- 3rd Offense: Three-day suspension; parent notification
- 4th Offense: Administrator's discretion

Enforcement for staff: Should follow the school's personnel regulations as with any other personnel policy.

Enforcement for visitors: Communicate, Communicate and Communicate.

CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT (JGI)

All employees of the Sumter County Board of Education, as well as persons who attend to a child pursuant to their duties as a volunteer for the school system, who have reason or cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred shall notify the principal or the school system's designee, who shall report such abuse immediately, but in no case later than 24 hours from the time there is reasonable cause to believe that suspected child abuse has occurred, in accordance with Georgia law and the protocol for handling child abuse cases for Sumter County, Georgia.

Under no circumstances shall the principal or designee to whom a report of child abuse has been made exercise any control, restraint, modification or make other change to the information provided by a mandated reporter, although the reporter may be consulted prior to the making of a report and may provide any additional, relevant and necessary information when making the report.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS (JCAC)

Sexual harassment means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

An employee of the District conditioning the provision of a District aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;

Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the District's education program or activity; or

"Sexual assault"- an offense classified as a forcible or non-forcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; or

"Dating Violence"- sex-based violence committed by a person-

(A) who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and

(B) where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:

(i) The length of the relationship.

(ii) The type of relationship.

(iii) The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship; or

"Domestic Violence"- sex-based violence which includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant monies, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction; or

"Sex-based Stalking" - engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to-

(A) fear for his or her safety or the safety of others; or

(B) suffer substantial emotional distress.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

It is the policy of the Sumter County Schools Board of Education to comply fully with the requirements of state law, Title IX and its accompanying regulations.

Sumter County School District prohibits discrimination based on sex and sexual harassment of students by other students, employees, volunteers or others over whom the District has authority in any District education program or activity. Education program or activity includes locations, events, or circumstances over which the District exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs.

The District shall respond promptly in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent when it has actual knowledge of sexual harassment against a person in an education program or activity.

The District shall require that any individual designated and authorized as a Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, or any person designated to facilitate an informal resolution process, not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent. The District shall ensure that Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, will receive training on the definition of sexual harassment, the scope of the District's education program or activity, how to conduct an investigation and grievance process including questioning, appeals, and informal resolution processes, as applicable, and how to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias. The District shall ensure that decision-makers receive training on any technology to be used during questioning, and on issues of relevance of questions and evidence, including when questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant. The District also shall ensure that investigators receive training on issues of relevance to create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence. Any materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, shall not rely on sex stereotypes and shall promote impartial investigations and adjudications of formal complaints of sexual harassment.

Reports or complaints made to the Sumter County School District regarding alleged sexual harassment in violation of Title IX shall be processed in accordance with the process outlined in detail in the District's board policy manual. The complete manual may be viewed on the district's website.

STUDENT RECORDS (JR)

It is the policy of the Sumter County Board of Education that the School District shall comply with the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Student Data Privacy, Accessibility, and Transparency Act of Georgia (the Act). For the purposes of this policy, a “parent” is defined as a natural parent, a guardian, or an individual acting as a parent in the absence of a parent or guardian. An “eligible student” is defined as a student who has reached 18 years of age or is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

The Superintendent shall implement procedures whereby every principal is directed to develop a means to notify, on an annual basis, parents and eligible students, including parents or eligible students who are disabled or who have a primary or home language other than English, of their rights under the FERPA and the Act, either through a student handbook distributed to each student in the school or by any means that are reasonably likely to inform them of their rights. Generally, a parent or eligible student will be permitted to obtain a copy of the student’s education records upon reasonable notice and payment of reasonable copying costs.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Confidentiality of student records shall be preserved while access is provided to parents, eligible students, and school officials with legitimate educational interests, as described in the annual parent notice.

With the exception of directory information as defined below, personally identifiable information will not be released by the school district from an education record without prior written consent of the parent or eligible student, except to the extent authorized by the FERPA and its implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R. § 99.31.

The Board of Education designates the following information as "directory information." Unless a parent or eligible student makes a timely request to the principal of the school where the student is enrolled that such information not be designated as directory information for the individual student, such information will not be considered confidential and may be disclosed upon request.

Directory information as follows:

- (a) Student’s name, address and telephone number;
- (b) Student’s date and place of birth;
- (c) Student’s e-mail address;
- (d) Student’s participation in official school activities and sports;
- (e) Weight and height of members of an athletic team;
- (f) Dates of attendance at schools within the district;
- (g) Honors and awards received during the time enrolled in district schools;
- (h) Photograph; and
- (i) Grade level.

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS PARENTS RIGHT-TO KNOW

Parents Right to Know

By law, LEAs are required to notify parents that they may request information regarding the teacher's or the paraprofessional's professional qualifications, including the following:

- Whether the teacher/paraprofessional has met the Georgia Professional Standards Commission certification requirements for the grade level and subject area(s) in which the teacher provides instruction;
- Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency or other provisional status through which Georgia qualifications or certification criteria have been waived;
- The college major and any graduate certification or degree held by the teacher;
- Whether or not the student is provided services by paraprofessional; and if so, their qualifications.

The District will:

- Notify parents in a format that is understandable and will ensure that all parents have the opportunity to receive the information. To the extent practicable, the notification should be provided in a language that parents may understand. This may include, but is not limited to a LEA or school handbook, a letter mailed home, inclusion in a newsletter, posting on a website, and/ or a school-wide email.
- Ensure the notification or document that contains the notification must include the principal's contact information, the school or LEA name, the date/ month and year of notification.
- **Maintain records that document the dissemination of the Parents Right to Know in multiple forms to the parents of all students.**

Procedures for Professional Qualifications (PQ)

With the reauthorization of ESEA/NCLB as ESEA/ESSA, highly qualified requirements that existed under NCLB have been replaced with the professional qualifications required for ESEA/ESSA.

The District continues to hire teachers with demonstrated content area expertise (certification, major or coursework, assessments) in the fields in which they are assigned. In FY18, the State will begin reporting:

- Inexperienced teachers, principals and other school leaders,
- Teachers teaching with emergency or provisional credentials,
- Teachers who are not teaching in the subject or field for which the teacher is certified or licensed (ESEA/ESSA Sec. 1111(h)(1)&(5)).

The Title I office, along with Human Resources, will maintain a list that includes the status of all Title I paid staff. In Sumter County School System, all staff paid from Title I funds must be professionally qualified (PQ).

Procedures for Parent Notification of Non-PQ

Principals will adhere to parent notification requirements for non-PQ staff. Copies of the parent letters will be given to the Family Engagement Coordinator. A copy will also be sent to the Title I office.

PURCHASING/HANDLING SCHOOL FUNDS/SOLICITATION (JKB)

The Board of Education must approve all fund-raising activities to be conducted by students. The Superintendent is authorized to promulgate rules guiding approval of fund-raisers.

Neither commercial interest nor charitable organizations which have not received approval from the school principal for the fund-raising in question may use students to advertise, solicit funds, or sell any article or subscription.

The Sumter County Board of Education believes that certain activities conducted for the purposes of raising funds by school children, including, but not limited to, games of chance and lotteries, are inappropriate and, therefore, prohibits such activities.

Students shall not participate in any fund-raising activity which involves them in selling or distributing merchandise of any kind or soliciting contributions, pledges or orders from door-to-door.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION

Workers' compensation is an accident insurance program paid by your employer which may provide you with medical, rehabilitation and income benefits if you are injured on the job. These benefits are provided to help you return to work. It also provides benefits to your dependents if you die as a result of a job related injury.

Coverage begins from the first day on your job.

You should report any accident occurring on the job to your supervisor immediately. Each school/department has a Workers' compensation designee in the office assigned to assist injured employees in the proper reporting procedure. If you wait longer than 30 days, you may lose your benefits.



Workers' Compensation Procedure

Important! Failure to comply with the following procedure when an on-the-job injury occurs may prevent an injured worker from receiving benefits.

- 1. When an employee/contracted laborer is injured at work, he/she must immediately report the injury to his/her supervisor or to the school nurse.
2. Should an injury require medical treatment, he/she must select a physician from the list below. Please note this list is subject to change so consult your supervisor to ensure you select a panel physician. An Official Notice is posted in the administrative office of your building.
3. The injured employee/contracted laborer is required to undergo an Alcohol/Drug Screening when receiving initial treatment by a panel physician.
4. In case of any emergency, the supervisor or nurse should seek emergency treatment for the injured worker from the nearest hospital or clinic. Any follow-up care must be provided by a panel physician. Failure to do so could jeopardize payment of your medical bills under workers' compensation law, and the injured worker may be personally liable for payment of unauthorized medical treatment.
5. After the employee/contracted laborer has been treated for his or her injury an appointment with the Superintendent of Schools will be scheduled to discuss the work related accident.

Table with 3 columns: Provider Name, Address, and Phone Number. Includes entries for Phoebe Sumter Family & Sports Medicine Associates, After Hours Care of Americus, Regional Eye Center, South Georgia Medical Service, Crisp Regional Convenient Care, MSA-Musculoskeletal Associates, Hughston Clinic, and Orthopedic Associates.

Employee / Contract Labor Statement

I have read and understand the above procedures to be followed for injuries sustained on the job.

Printed Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____

Official Notice

(This notice must be posted in a conspicuous place readily accessible to the employee at all times.)

PANEL OF PHYSICIANS OFFICIAL NOTICE

This business operates under the Georgia Workers' Compensation Law.

WORKERS MUST REPORT ALL ACCIDENTS IMMEDIATELY TO THE EMPLOYER BY ADVISING THE EMPLOYER PERSONALLY, AN AGENT, REPRESENTATIVE, BOSS, SUPERVISOR, OR FOREMAN.

If a worker is injured at work, the employer shall pay medical and rehabilitation expenses within the limits of the law. In some cases the employer will also pay a part of the worker's lost wages.

Work injuries and occupational diseases should be reported in writing whenever possible. The worker may lose the right to receive compensation if an accident is not reported within 30 days (see C.C.G.A. § 34-9-00).

The employer will supply free of charge, upon request, a form for reporting accidents and will also furnish, free of charge, information about workers' compensation. The employer will also furnish to the employee, upon request, copies of board forms or file with the employer pertaining to an employee's claim.

A worker injured on the job must select a doctor from the list below. The minimum panel shall consist of at least six physicians, including an orthopedic surgeon with no more than two physicians from industrial clinics (see O.C.G.A. § 34-9-201). Further, this panel shall include one minority physician, whenever feasible (See Rule 201 for definition of minority physician). The Board may grant exceptions to the required size of the panel where it is demonstrated that more than four physicians are not reasonably accessible. One change to another doctor from the list may be made without permission. Further changes require the permission of the employer or the State Board of Workers' Compensation.

State Board of Workers' Compensation
270 Peachtree Street, N.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-1299
404-656-3818
or 1-800-533-0682
<https://sbwc.georgia.gov>

SUMTER CO BOE - 8/2021

Phoebe Sumter Family and Sports Medicine Associates (Family Medicine)	555 E. Jefferson St Americus, GA 31709	229.924.2393
After Hours Care of Americus (After Hours Only)	509-A E Lamar St Americus, GA 31709	229.628.1300
Regional Eye Center (Ophthalmology)	1110 E. Lanier St Americus, GA 31709	229.924.4022
South Georgia Medical Service (Family Medicine)	139A Southland Rd Americus, GA 31706	229.931.7506
Crisp Regional Convenient Care (Urgent Care)	2161 Hospital Dr Cordale, GA 31015	229.275.2000
MSA - Musculoskeletal Associates T. Scott McGee (Orthopaedic Surgery) Bobby Pinnix, MD (Orthopaedic Surgery) Henry Harris Barnett, M.D. (Orthopaedic Surgery) Michael Anthony Davis, M.D. (Orthopaedic Surgery)	516 18th Ave E Cordale, GA 31015	229.275.1730
Hughston Clinic James E. McGraw, MD (Orthopaedic Surgery)	117 Lakeland Plaza Laurens, GA 31703	229.489.0355
Orthopaedic Associates Paul Anton Winters (Orthopaedic Surgery) Thomas R. Darden, Jr. (Orthopaedic Surgery) Vollsea Lawrence, DO (Orthopaedic Surgery)	813 Poling Rd Blvd Romey, GA 31771	229.885.4707

(Additional doctors may be added on a separate sheet.)

The insurance company providing coverage for this business under the Workers' Compensation Law is:

GEWCT

Administered by: Georgia Administrative 1775 Spectrum Drive, Suite 100 Lawrenceville, GA 30043 - Phone:
800/421-0710 Fax: 770/963-5754

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT THE STATE BOARD OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION AT 404-656-3818 OR 1-800-533-0682 OR VISIT
<https://sbwc.georgia.gov>

Willfully making a false statement for the purpose of obtaining or denying benefits is a crime subject to penalties of up to \$10,000.00 per violation (O.C.G.A. §§34-9-10 and §34-9-16).

SUMTER COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Accident/Injury Report

Please fully complete this report. Be aware that all reports of work-related injury or illness will be investigated, and that any fraudulent reports/claims will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

TODAY'S DATE _____ EMPLOYEE NAME _____

SS# _____ DATE OF BIRTH ____/____/____ AGE _____ SEX _____

TELEPHONE# _____ ADDRESS (give street address) _____

NAME & TELEPHONE OF NEAREST FRIEND/ RELATIVE _____

WHO IS YOUR PERSONAL/FAMILY PHYSICIAN? _____

SCHOOL OR LOCATION WHERE ACCIDENT OCCURRED _____

DATE OF INJURY ____/____/____ HOUR OF DAY _____ DAY OF WEEK _____

IF THE DATE OF INJURY IS DIFFERENT FROM TODAY'S, EXPLAIN WHY INCIDENT IS BEING REPORTED LATE _____

DID YOU TELL YOUR SUPERVISOR? _____ SUPERVISOR'S NAME? _____

WERE THERE ANY WITNESSES? _____ IF YES, PLEASE LIST THEM _____

DID YOU CONTINUE TO WORK? _____

DESCRIBE FULLY HOW ACCIDENT OCCURRED, NAMING THE MACHINE, TOOL OR THING CAUSING THE INJURY, AND STATE WHAT YOU WERE DOING WHEN INJURED: _____

LOCATION ON BODY OF INJURY. (DESCRIBE FULLY THE EXACT LOCATION OF INJURY, RIGHT OR LEFT, ETC.) _____

WERE GUARDS AND/OR SPECIAL SAFETY EQUIPMENT REQUIRED FOR JOB YOU WERE PERFORMING? _____ WERE THEY IN PLACE AT TIME OF ACCIDENT? _____ IF NO, PLEASE EXPLAIN

IF YES, PROVIDE DETAILS _____

HAVE YOU EVER HAD A SIMILAR PAIN OR INJURY BEFORE? _____ IF YES, PLEASE LIST DETAILS

WAS IT DUE TO AN ON-THE-JOB INJURY? _____

PLEASE TELL US IF YOU THINK THERE IS ANYTHING THAT COULD BE DONE TO PREVENT THIS ACCIDENT/INJURY FROM HAPPENING AGAIN _____

DO YOU FEEL YOU RECEIVED APPROPRIATE SAFETY TRAINING FOR THE JOB YOU WERE ON WHEN THIS INJURY OCCURRED? _____

My signature below indicates that I have completed this accident/injury report in my own handwriting, or if unable to do so, the responses filled out by my employer have been reviewed with me, and that everything contained in this report is accurate and true.

EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

EMPLOYER SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT OFFICE USE ONLY

WAS FIRST AIDE APPLIED AT SCHOOL OR LOCATION? YES () NO ()

DID EMPLOYEE SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION? YES () NO ()

IF YES, NAME OF PHYSICIAN OR HOSPITAL _____

HAS INJURED RETURNED TO WORK? YES () NO () IF YES, DATE _____ HOUR _____

CENTRAL OFFICE USE ONLY

SALARY _____ ACCIDENT CAUSE _____

HIRE DATE _____ INJURY TYPE _____

CLAIM STATUS _____ BODY LOCATION _____



REFUSAL OF DOCTOR'S CARE

I, _____, hereby state that on _____
Please print name Date

I, (Describe accident / injury) _____

I have reported an injury, have reviewed the Employee Handbook pertaining to the treatment by one of our WC panel physicians, have been offered medical treatment, but have refused that medical treatment. I understand that in the future if I seek medical treatment, it will be necessary for me to follow the procedures set out in the Employee Handbook pertaining to treatment by one of our WC panel physicians.

I further understand that I am required to undergo a post accident drug/alcohol test at the time of the reporting of the above incident.

I missed less than 4 hours from work. Yes () No ()

I returned to regular work on _____.



ATTENDING PHYSICIAN'S REPORT

Employee Name _____ SS# _____

Physician _____ Date _____

I hereby request medical treatment and authorize the physician(s) to release to my employer or its representatives, all information, opinions, conclusions found as a result of his/her evaluation and/or treatment of my injury.

Employee Signature _____ Date _____

Instructions to attending physician: Please complete this form and return to employee. Note that we have extensive modified duty available. Be sure to give us any specific limitations our employee may have, and we will gladly accommodate.

Diagnosis: _____

Treatment: _____

Recheck? _____

Please note that if employee needs referral to a specialist, you must contact our office prior to any referrals.

Work Status Report

_____ Regular duty / no restrictions

_____ Modified duty / as below (duration: _____ days)

_____ No work (duration: _____ days) ****Please call our office to discuss the availability of modified duty prior to placing anyone on a "No work" restriction.**

Modified duty restrictions:

_____ No climbing

_____ No pushing or pulling

_____ No standing/walking

_____ No reaching above shoulders

_____ No bending/stooping

_____ No operating heavy machinery

_____ No lifting over _____ pounds

_____ Other restrictions: _____

Physician Signature _____ Date _____

Sumter County Schools
Attn: Human Resources
100 Learning Lane
Americus, GA 31719
229-931-8500

Underwriter: GEWCT
Georgia Administrative
1775 Spectru Drive, Suite 100
Lawrenceville, GA 30043
800-421-0710 FAX 770-963-5754

INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE/E-MAIL/VOICE MAIL/SOCIAL NETWORKING

Internet Safety

The Superintendent, Administrators and/or other appropriate personnel, with respect to any computers belonging to the Sumter County School System and having access to the Internet shall:

- Insure that a qualifying "technology protection measure", as that term is defined in section 1703 (b)(1) of the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000, is installed and in continuous operation; and
- Institute, maintain and enforce procedures or guidelines which provide for monitoring the online activities of users and the use of the chosen technology protection measure to prevent access to visual depictions that are (i) obscene, (ii) child pornography, or (iii) "harmful to minors", as that term is defined in section 1721(c) of the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000.

The Superintendent, Administrators and/or other appropriate personnel shall, with respect to access to the Internet by or through computers, networks or other devices belonging to the Sumter County School System, institute, maintain and enforce procedures or guidelines which:

- Provide for monitoring the online activities of users to limit, to the extent practicable, access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet and the World Wide Web;
- Are designed to promote the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
- Are designed to prevent unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking", and other unauthorized activities by minors online;
- Are designed to prevent the unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information regarding minors; and
- Are designed to restrict minors' access to materials "harmful to minors", as that term is defined in section 1721(c) of the Children's Internet Protection Act of 2000.
- Are designed to ensure that students are provided age appropriate instruction regarding safe and appropriate behavior on social networking sites, chat rooms, and other Internet services, behaviors that may constitute cyber bullying, and how to respond when subjected to cyber bullying.

INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE STANDARDS SUMTER COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

All staff and students must read and sign the Sumter County School System Internet Acceptable Use Agreement as designated in the Student Handbooks and shall indicate acceptance of the agreement by their signature.

The goal in providing Internet service is to promote educational excellence in schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. Along with access to computers and people all over the world is the possibility of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the school setting. On a global network it is impossible to control all materials and a user may accidentally or purposely discover controversial information. It is the users responsibility to avoid initiating access to such material. The Sumter County School System firmly believes that the valuable information and interaction on this worldwide network far outweigh the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the school system.

Internet access is coordinated through a complex association of government agencies, and regional and state networks. In addition, the smooth operation of the network relies upon the proper conduct of the end users who must adhere to strict guidelines. These guidelines are provided here so that the user is aware of the responsibilities that come with the privilege of having access to the Internet. In general, efficient, ethical, and legal utilization of the network resources is required.

Internet - Terms and Conditions

1. Acceptable Use - Use of the Internet must be in support of education and research and consistent with the educational objectives of the Sumter County School System. Use of any other organization's network or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for that network. In addition to adherence to the policies and procedures of various networks and any set forth by a service provider or host system, users must abide by all rules and procedures specified and deemed necessary at the site from which access to the Internet is made. These procedures may include, but are not limited to, a logbook, user time restrictions, and limitations on use of finite resources. Transmission of any material in violation of any United States or state regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret Use for commercial activities by for-profit institutions is generally not acceptable. Use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited. Illegal activities are strictly prohibited.

2. Privileges - The use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and inappropriate use will result in cancellation of those privileges. Any student user not complying with the *Sumter County School System Internet Acceptable Use Agreement* shall lose Internet privileges for a period of not less than one month. On the second offense, privileges will be revoked for the remainder of the school year. In order for the student to regain Internet access, he/she must repeat the application process the following school year. Any violations will be documented in the student's permanent record. Repeated Internet policy violations will result in the Internet license being permanently revoked.

Unauthorized use of the network, intentional deletion or damage to files and data belonging to other users, or copyright violations may be termed theft as defined in the Student Policy Handbook.

Before using the Internet, each student will participate in an orientation conducted by a faculty member. The orientation will be on the *Sumter County School System Acceptable Use Agreement*, the proper use of the network, and network etiquette. Based upon the acceptable use guidelines in this document, the Sumter County School System administrator for the Internet node and the local school system administrator will deem what is inappropriate use and their decision is final. Also, the system administrators may deny access at any time. The administration, faculty, and staff members of Sumter County School System may request that a system administrator deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges.

3. Network Etiquette - Users are expected to abide by the generally accepted rules of network etiquette.

4. Disclaimer - Sumter County School System makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the service it is providing. The school system will not be responsible for any damages suffered by any user. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, misdeliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or user errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the risk of the user. Sumter County School System specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

5. Security - Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. A user identifying a security problem must notify the supervising classroom teacher or the local school system administrator. The security problem is not to be demonstrated to any other user. Users must never divulge or allow others to use their passwords. Use of another individual's account is prohibited without express written permission of the account holder. Account holders are ultimately responsible for all activities under their account. Attempting to logon as a system administrator is prohibited. Any user identified as being a security risk or as having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the Internet.

6. Vandalism - Vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm, modify, or destroy data, equipment, or software.

The signature(s) on the Student Handbook is (are) legally binding and indicate(s) that the party (parties) who signed has (have) read the terms and conditions carefully and understand(s) their significance.

*Sumter County School System Staff Internet
Acceptable Use Policy*

AGREEMENT

I understand and will abide by the Sumter County School System Staff Internet Acceptable Use Policy Terms and Conditions. I further understand that any violation of the regulations is unethical and may constitute a *criminal offense*. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken and/or appropriate legal action may be initiated. I have received a copy of the Sumter County School System Staff Internet Acceptable Use Policy Terms *and* Conditions.

Date _____ / _____ / _____

User's Full Name (please print) _____

**User
Signature** _____

School/Work Site _____

CHILD ABUSE

Definition

An injury or a pattern of injuries to a child that is non-accidental. Child abuse includes non-accidental physical injury, physical neglect, sexual abuse and emotional abuse.

CHILD ABUSE IS AGAINST THE LAW

Under Georgia State Law, a child is considered to be abused or neglected if the child is under the age of 18 and has had a physical injury or injuries inflicted...other than by accidental means, by a parent or caretaker OR has been neglected or exploited by a parent or caretaker OR has been sexually exploited. (Georgia Code Section 19-7-5)

**STATEWIDE, TOLL-FREE HELPLINE
1-800-532-3208**

The Special Role of the Educator

Teachers and other school personnel are in a unique position to recognize and respond to the sexually abused child. Outside the home no one interacts with children more consistently over a period of time than teachers. School personnel offer one of the best ways for identifying and helping a child in need.

The process of protecting a child's *safety* involves three steps: identification, investigation, and intervention. Educators are not required or expected to investigate or intervene but rather to set the investigative process in motion. In a very real sense school personnel are the first line of defense in the prevention of child sexual abuse. Educators can make themselves aware of indicators of abuse and reporting procedures and can also use prevention materials in classroom instruction.

STUDENT WELFARE-CHILD ABUSE REPORT

(Policy - JGI)

In recognition of the legal mandate requiring educators to report suspected child abuse and neglect to the appropriate authorities, the Board establishes the following procedural guidelines.

- 1 . Any child under age eighteen who is believed to have had physical injury inflicted upon him/her, other than by accidental means, by a parent or caretaker, or has been sexually assaulted, shall be identified to the Sumter County Department of Family and Children Services.
- 2 . For the purposes of these guidelines, the school principals shall be considered the appropriate personnel to make reports of suspected child abuse and neglect to the Department of Family and Children Services. All school personnel suspecting child abuse and neglect shall make complaints to the designated delegate.
- 3 . The building principal shall notify the Superintendent in writing of all referrals received on child abuse and neglect.
- 4 . The principal shall be the school liaison with the Department of Family and Children Services in relation to the child's school adjustment and performance, and shall take investigative steps individually or with the assistance of the attendance officer before finally reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to the Department of Family and Children Services.
- 5 . In order to meet legal responsibilities, reports of suspected child abuse and neglect are to be made in good faith, and the education of personnel in the identification of child abuse and neglect shall rest with the *system* and be coordinated by the building principal. This reporting is legal under Sections 99.32 (a) (5) and 99.36 of the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act and does not constitute a violation of it so long as the following factors are taken into account:
 - a . The seriousness of the threat to the child's health and safety.
 - b . The need of the information from the child's education records to protect the child's health and safety.
 - c . Whether the information is being disclosed to persons who are in a position to deal with the emergency.
 - d . Whether time is of the essence in dealing with the emergency.
- 6 . All Sumter County School personnel who have contact with students shall receive training in the identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect with annual update: in the form of written information.

STATE REF.: Georgia Board of Education Rule JGEB State Standards J 2.1; J 2.2
LEGAL REF.:
O.C.G.A., 19-7-5

COPYRIGHT POLICY

The Sumter County Board of Education abides by the Copyright Laws of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) and prohibits copying or use of copyrighted material not specifically permitted or exempted by the copyright law by employees of the system. The Board places the liability for willful infringement upon the person making or requesting a copy or using the material and designates the Assistant Superintendent, principals and media specialists as disseminators of copyright *clearances*, maintaining appropriate copyright records and placing warning notices on or near all equipment capable of making or modifying copies. The Board identifies Copyright: A Guide to Information and Resources and updates from the state Department as procedural guides for Sumter County School *System* employees in complying with Federal law.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR SCHOOL MEDIA EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

Students and school personnel shall be accountable for media books, periodicals, software, materials and equipment purchased through public and school funds. Reimbursement shall be made through the system procedures.

System Procedures

Individuals who have checked out or been assigned materials are responsible for the return or reimbursement of those items.*

1. The charge for lost or damaged (beyond use) items will be the purchased price.
2. Hardback books without a documented price will be \$5.00
3. Paperback books without a documented price will be \$3.00
4. Lost periodicals will be the per issue price.
5. Negligence and/or abuse will be addressed by building administrators.
6. *No* overdue fees will be charged.
7. Fees for damaged barcode labels will be \$1.00.

*Items paid for that have been found will-be reimbursed upon request by the end of the fiscal year.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MATERIAL MANAGEMENT

1. Material should be returned to the Media Center at the completion of the unit of study.
2. Library books should be kept in one location and counted daily.
3. Periodic circulation printouts will be issued. Teacher may request a printout at anytime.
4. Teachers should return *items* to Media Center before they are used by another teacher.
5. To preserve the life of equipment and materials, teachers are encouraged to keep items away from the chalk board.
6. Adults should transport equipment. Students are not allowed to transport televisions.

CLASSIFICATIONS OF EMPLOYEES

1. Certified Tenured Employees Teachers who have not earned tenure with any other Georgia school system will earn tenure with Sumter County School System when offered and accepted a fourth full time teaching contract with the system. Teachers who have earned tenure with another Georgia school system will earn tenure with Sumter County School System when offered and accepted a second full time teaching contract with the system. Tenured teachers have the right to request a hearing when not recommended for renewal of continued employment with Sumter County School System. Administrators employed in administrative positions after April 7, 1995 will no longer be able to earn tenure, as indicated by OCGA §20-2-942.

2. Certified Non-Tenured Employees Non-tenured employees are not guaranteed continued employment with the Sumter County School System. Non-tenured employees who are not renewed for continued employment have the right to request the reason for termination. Any terminated employee requesting reasons should do so in writing to the Superintendent. The request and response will become a part of the personnel file. Any contracted employee who will not be offered a contract for the upcoming school year must be notified in writing before May 15 or a contract must be offered for the next school year.

3. Non-certified At-Will Employees All non-certified staff, including clerical, paraprofessionals, aides, maintenance, bus drivers, and lunchroom workers, are considered “at will employees” and cannot earn tenure with the school system. Non-certified or classified employees will be evaluated annually based on performance and attendance. At-will employees can be terminated at the discretion of the school system at any time and are not entitled to a hearing.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT/AGREEMENT TO COMPLY

I, (Employee) _____ have read and understand the policies and procedures set forth in this 2023-2024 Sumter County Schools Employee Handbook. Furthermore, I agree to abide by these policies and procedures.

Employee Name

Employee Signature

Date