

# COFFEE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

## Handbook for Certified and Support Personnel



Coffee County Schools  
1343 McArthur Street  
Manchester, TN 37355

Phone (931) 723-5150  
Fax (931) 723-5153

## **Amendment to Handbook**

This handbook is not an employment contract. Every situation and/or question cannot be anticipated and may or may not be answered in this handbook.

As law, policies and procedures change, the employer reserves the right to make necessary revisions, changes or eliminate any of the policies and/or benefits described in this handbook.

Before relying upon the provisions set out herein, it is the employee's responsibility to check with the employer to see if any changes have occurred.

Click on the [link](#) for Policies of Coffee County Board of Education. Policies can also be found on the system's web-site.

### **Equal Employment Opportunity**

(Policy 5.104)

The Coffee County School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin age, sex or disability, or veteran status in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its programs and activities. Any person having inquiries concerning the School's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), or Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), may contact the Assistant Director of Schools or Human Resources.

# **“Learning Today for Brighter Tomorrows”**

## **Mission Statement**

The MISSION of the Coffee County School System is for all students to achieve and exceed state performance standards while preparing them to graduate and become self-confident and responsible life-long learners

## **Vision Statement**

The shared VISION of the Coffee County Board of Education is to become one of the top performing systems in the nation and become a model of academic excellence; to understand and support the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder; to provide an educational program which will ensure that all students reach their maximum potential; to provide schools that are comfortable, both physically and emotionally; to provide state of the art technology and resources for teaching and learning; to encourage learning as exciting and empowering; to provide highly qualified teachers who are positive role models and who exhibit a desire to address individual needs by their own continual learning; to graduate students with character and knowledge to be successful and to graduate students who can be proud of what they have accomplished and proud of their schools.

## **Motto**

“Children First”

## **Goals of Coffee County Board of Education**

The Board is charged, on behalf of the public, with the responsibility for determining the educational goals of the school system. In discharging that responsibility, the Board has adopted the following goals in four primary areas:

Instruction, Personnel, Students and Operations.

The Board shall develop policies to implement the goals within each area and shall annually review these goals and revise them as necessary so that each program will at all times support the stated goals. The Director of Schools is responsible for developing procedures and strategies to implement the goals of the Board.

### *INSTRUCTION*

1. To promote a plan for the organized improvement of school curriculum, including the articulation between elementary and secondary schools;
2. To provide offerings which explore a wide range of career and service opportunities;
3. To promote an integration of academic, physical, social and emotional growth experiences for each student; and
4. To promote the recognition of achievement in all endeavors (example, academic, athletic).

### *STUDENTS*

1. To structure the overall instructional program to provide sufficient alternatives to meet a variety of individual needs and aspirations;
2. To ensure that each student's interests, capacities and objectives are considered in his/her learning program;
3. To develop a comprehensive program for disabled students providing the least restrictive programs; and
4. To help students gain an understanding of themselves, as well as skills and techniques in living and working with others and being responsible citizens.

## *PERSONNEL*

1. To provide high quality performance by the staff, including both professional and classified personnel ;
2. To establish acceptable performance standards for all personnel;
3. To provide in-service training and professional growth experiences for teachers, administrators and classified personnel ; and
4. To maintain an evaluation system for the improvement of the instructional system.

## *OPERATIONS*

1. To make every effort to secure adequate funding for the educational program in support of the stated goals;
2. To maintain an adequate system of fiscal and business management;
3. To develop plans for the efficient use of school facilities; and
4. To ensure appropriate communication between the Director of Schools and the Board

## **Coffee County Board of Education Office Hours**

The Central Office is open on regular workdays (Monday-Friday) between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. throughout the year. The office may be closed during inclement weather. The work hours may vary in the summer months of June and July.

## **Board Meetings** (Policy 1.400)

The Board will transact all business at official meetings which may be either regular or special. Every meeting of the Board, except with the attorney to discuss pending or threatened litigation, will be open to the public. Open meetings will be physically accessible to all students, employees, and interested citizens. No one shall bring a camera, camcorder or other photographic equipment to board meetings without the consent of the Board.

### *REGULAR MEETINGS*

Regular meetings of the Board shall be held on the second Monday of the month at 4:30 p.m. In instances when any regular meeting date falls on a legal holiday, the meeting shall be rescheduled by the chair.

### *SPECIAL MEETINGS*

The Board shall hold such special meetings as necessary to transact the business of the Board. Such meetings shall be called by the chair whenever, in the chair's judgment, the interests of the schools require it, or when requested to do so by a majority of the Board. Only business related to the call of the meeting, and details related to agenda items shall be discussed or transacted by the Board at a special meeting.

### *ADJOURNED MEETINGS*

The Board of Education may hold an adjourned meeting of the Board to a specific locality and at a specific time, provided however, the Board shall give adequate public notice of such meeting.

Only topics appropriate to the agenda of the meeting adjourned may be acted upon at the adjourned session.

### *ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE*

Absent Board members may attend a regular or special meeting by electronic means if the member is absent because of work, a family emergency, or the member's military service. If a board member is absent due to military service, he/she may participate electronically as often as he/she is able to do so. However, a board member may not participate electronically more than two (2) times per year for absences due to work and/or family emergencies.

### *GENERAL REQUIREMENTS*

The following requirements apply to all electronic attendance, regardless of the reason for the member's absence:

1. A quorum of the Board must be physically present at the meeting in order for any member to attend electronically.
2. Any member wishing to participate electronically must do so using technology which allows the Chair to visually identify the member.

3. The responsibility for the connection lies with the member wishing to participate electronically. No more than three (3) attempts to connect shall be made, unless the Board chooses to make additional attempts.

#### *WORK RELATED ABSENCE*

The following requirements apply to electronic attendance due to a work related absence:

1. The Board member must be absent from the county due to work.
2. The member wishing to participate must give the Chair and director at least five (5) days' notice prior to the meeting of the member's desire to participate electronically.

#### *FAMILY EMERGENCY*

The following requirement applies to electronic attendance due to a family emergency:

1. The member must be absent due to the hospitalization of the member or the death or hospitalization of the member's spouse, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, step-son, step-daughter, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, or grandparents.
2. No member may participate more than twice per year due to a family emergency.

#### **Classifications and Qualifications** (Policy 5.102)

##### *ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPERVISORY PERSONNEL*

All administrative and supervisory positions in the school system are established initially by the Board, by state law, or State Board Rule, Regulations, and Minimum Standards. To be considered for certificated administrative or supervisory positions, the applicant must show the following qualifications:

1. Professional teaching certification; and

2. Administrative or supervisory certification and experience in accordance with state law and State Board Rules and Regulations in the appropriate area based on the minimum of a master's degree.

Non-certified administrative and supervisory personnel shall possess sufficient training and experience to perform the services required and such additional qualifications as the Board and the director of schools shall determine.

### *PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL*

The professional staff members are the personnel whose employment status requires certification in accordance with the rules and regulations of the State Board of Education.

### *SUPPORT PERSONNEL*

The support staff members are personnel whose regular employment does not require certification in accordance with rules and regulations of the State Department of Education.

## **Terms of Employment**

Certified employees are typically paid for a work year of two hundred (200) days. This work year consists of one hundred-eighty (180) days of student contact, five (5) days of staff development, three (3) administrative days, (2) personal days. The approved use of stockpiled days for approved staff development activities may reduce accordingly the number of student contact days.

## **Emergency School Closing** (Policy 1.8011)

The Board authorizes the director of schools to close schools in the event of hazardous weather or any other emergency which presents a threat to the safety of students, staff members or school property. As



soon as the decision to close schools is made, the director of schools will notify the public media and request that an announcement be made.

In the event schools need to be delayed, closed, or students need to be dismissed early, the Central Office will notify the local radio stations, and the Nashville television stations channels 2, 4, 5, and FOX.

You may also go to our website at [www.coffeecountyschools](http://www.coffeecountyschools) and sign up for *NotifyMe*. This will send a text message regarding any closing or dismissal of schools.

## **ID Badges**

Every full-time employee must make an appointment with Human Resources at the Central Office to have an ID badge made. This badge must be worn at all times while on school grounds.

If the badge is lost or stolen there will be a \$5 replacement cost. If the badge breaks, you must return the badge to HR for a replacement.

You may use your badge to attend school sponsored athletic activities held in the school system at no charge. This does not include tournament games.

## **Confidentiality**

### *STUDENT PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY*

Students in the Coffee County Schools have the right to expect that information about them will be kept confidential by all staff.

Additionally, the U.S. Congress has addressed the privacy-related concerns of educators, parents, and students by enacting the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Among other provisions, FERPA allows the government to withdraw federal funds from any educational institution which disseminates a student's education records without his or her parent's consent.

- Each student with whom you work has the right to expect that nothing that happens to or about him or her will be repeated to anyone other than authorized school department employees, as designated by the administrators at your school. Even when discussing a student with those who are directly involved in a

student's education, such as a teacher, principal, or guidance counselor, you may not share otherwise confidential information with them unless it is relevant to the student's educational growth, safety, or well-being.

- You may not share information about a student even with others who are genuinely interested in the student's welfare, such as social workers, scout leaders, clergy, or nurses (a grave medical emergency, in which confidential information may be necessary for a student's care, is the only exception). Thus, you must refer all such questions to the school employees so authorized and indicated to you, typically the student's teacher or principal.
- Parents, friends, or community members may in good faith ask you questions about a student's problems or progress. Again, you must refer all such questions to the authorized school employees. You may not share information about a student even with members of your own family or the student's family.
- Before you speak, always remember that violating a student's confidentiality isn't just impolite, it's against the law!

### *EMPLOYEE CONFIDENTIALITY*

All employees will acknowledge that during the course of performing their assigned duties at Coffee County Schools that all access to personal information will be held in a confidential manner at all times during and after their employment and commit to the following obligations:

- Use and disclose confidential health information only in connection with and for the purpose of performing assigned duties.
- Request, obtain or communicate confidential health information only as necessary to perform assigned duties and shall refrain from requesting, obtaining or communicating more confidential health information than is necessary to accomplish assigned duties.
- Will take reasonable care to properly secure confidential health information on the computer and will take steps to ensure others cannot view or access such information. When away from workstation or when tasks are completed, the computer must be

logged out of or a password-protected screensaver used in order to prevent access by unauthorized users.

- Will not disclose personal passwords to anyone without the express written permission of department head or record or post it in an accessible location and will refrain from performing any tasks using another's password.
- Will document all disclosures of confidential health information, including those authorized by clients of and any accidental disclosures, in the appropriate client's file.

### **Central Office Staff**

Phone (931) 723-5150

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<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Email</i>
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Kelvin Shores	Deputy Director of Schools	<a href="mailto:shoresk@k12coffee.net">shoresk@k12coffee.net</a>
Tim Morris	Transportation Director	<a href="mailto:morrist@k12coffee.net">morrist@k12coffee.net</a>
Joahna Sizemore	Curriculum and Inst. Grades PreK-5	<a href="mailto:sizemorej@k12coffee.net">sizemorej@k12coffee.net</a>
Stephen Blessing	Curriculum and Inst. Grades 6-8/Testing	<a href="mailto:blessings@k12coffee.net">blessings@k12coffee.net</a>
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Stephanie Langham	Human Resources	<a href="mailto:langhams@k12coffee.net">langhams@k12coffee.net</a>
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## Coffee County School Board Members

Chairman- Dr. Gary Nester

Vice Chairman- Sandra Klonaris

Pat Barton

Larry Crabree

Robert Gilley

Brett Henley

Freda K. Jones

<p>Coffee County Central High School  <i>Principal: Paul Parsley</i>            100 Red Raider Dr            Manchester, TN 37355            Phone (931) 723-5159            FAX (931) 723-5161</p>	<p>Coffee County Raider Academy  <i>Principal: Angela Mankin Sellars</i>            865 McMinnville Hwy            Manchester, TN 37355            Phone (931) 570-2828            FAX (931) 723-8273</p>
<p>Coffee County Middle School  <i>Principal: Jimmy Anderson</i>            3063 Woodbury Hwy            Manchester, TN 37355            Phone (931) 723-5177            FAX (931) 723-5180</p>	<p>Deerfield Elementary  <i>Principal: Lia Basham-Parsley</i>            9123 Woodbury Hwy            Manchester, TN 37355            Phone (931) 570-2652            FAX (931) 723-7298</p>
<p>East Coffee Elementary  <i>Principal: Eric Keith</i>            6264 McMinnville Hwy            Manchester, TN 37355            Phone (931) 723-5185            FAX (931) 723-3231</p>	<p>Hillsboro Elementary  <i>Principal: Angela Morton</i>            284 Winchester Hwy            Hillsboro, TN 37342            Phone (931) 596-2775            FAX (931) 596-2107</p>
<p>New Union Elementary  <i>Principal: Jill Potts</i>            3320 Woodbury Hwy            Manchester, TN 37355            Phone (931) 723-5187            FAX (931) 723-5197</p>	<p>North Coffee Elementary  <i>Principal: Adam Clark</i>            6790 Murfreesboro Hwy            Manchester, TN 37355            Phone (931) 723-5183            FAX (931) 723-3230</p>
<p>Hickerson Elementary  <i>Principal: Kathy Crabtree</i>            5017 Old Manchester Hwy            Tullahoma, TN 37388            Phone (931) 455-9576            FAX (931) 455-3758</p>	<p>Coffee County Koss Center            Coffee County Virtual Academy  <i>Principal : Jeff Johnson</i>            1756 McMinnville Hwy            Manchester, TN 37355            Phone (931) 723-5189            FAX (931) 723-5172</p>

## **Qualifications**

All teachers shall be certified in accordance with state law and the regulations of the Tennessee State Department of Education.

It is the responsibility of the employee to secure a license and to maintain its validity. A certified employee can be dismissed if the required teacher's license or certificate is allowed to expire or otherwise become invalid or inactive.

Furthermore, it is the educator's responsibility to fulfill all applicable portions of the federal law, No child left behind, in regard to "highly qualified". All teachers of the identified 'core academic' areas must be 'Highly Qualified'. All newly hired teachers of the identified 'core academic' areas must be 'Highly Qualified' upon initial employment.

## **Employee Data**

All persons applying for any position with coffee County Schools are required, in advance of employment, to report on the application approved by the School Board if the applicant:

1. Has ever been convicted of a violation of law other than a minor traffic violation;
2. Have ever had a professional license or certificate revoked or suspended;
3. Have ever been convicted of any offense for physical or sexual abuse of a child;
4. Have ever had a charge of child abuse against you substantiated;
5. Have ever been involuntarily terminated or asked to resign in lieu of termination from another employer.

Knowingly falsifying information on the application shall be grounds for termination of employment and shall constitute a class A misdemeanor which must be reported to the district attorney general for prosecution.

Additionally, all persons applying for any position with coffee county schools shall be required to:

1. Submit fingerprints for a complete background check with the Tennessee Bureau Investigation and the Federal Bureau Investigation
2. Agree for a background check with Department of Children Services (DCS), Tennessee Sex Offender, and Tennessee Department of Health Abuse Registry
3. Submit a physical from a physician
4. Drug and alcohol screening

Any offers of employment shall be pending the return and disposition of such checks and contingent upon the satisfactory results.

Once an applicant has accepted an offer with Coffee County Schools, the following paperwork is required:

- W-4
- Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9
- ID Badge
- Transcripts (if applicable)
- Praxis scores (if applicable)
- Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS)
- Insurance Forms-In addition, various insurance options are available for purchase. Must set up an appointment with benefits coordinator
- Direct Deposit-Payroll-W-4
- Bloodborne Pathogen Training
- Drug Free Workplace Training
- Parapro Test (if applicable)
- Student and Employee Confidentiality Forms
- FMLA
- Sick Leave Bank
- Email and Technology AUP

## *INSURANCE*

Medical, dental and vision insurance is available to all new full time employees at no cost. All necessary paperwork must be completed within the first thirty (30) calendar days of actual employment. For an additional cost, you may add dependents and a spouse to your insurance. Must contact benefits for an appointment.

It is the responsibility of the employee to inform the benefit department when a new dependent (due to marriage, the birth or adoption of a child) needs to be added to the medical coverage. This must be done within the allowed sixty (60) days of the event for the new dependent to be properly covered. It is also the responsibility of the employee to inform the benefit department if the dependent loses his/her eligibility for coverage due to a divorce or if a child marries or otherwise does not meet the definition of an eligible dependent.

#### *SPECIAL ENROLLMENT PROVISIONS*

The federal law, Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA), allows employees and dependents to enroll in health coverage under certain conditions. Exceptions will be made for eligible employees or dependents if they lose their health insurance coverage offered through their employer or the employee's spouse/ex-spouse. The required documentation must be submitted to the benefits coordinator. Coverage must be applied for within sixty (60) days of loss of health coverage.

#### *ANNUAL ENROLLMENT TRANSFER PERIOD*

During late fall of each year, employees have an opportunity to select or transfer from one state group health insurance option/coverage to another. Benefit information is mailed to your home address and you should review this information carefully. If you decide you would like to transfer to another health care option, please contact the Benefit Department. All changes are effective the following January 1, and you must remain enrolled in that health care option until the next year.



## *COBRA*

In the event of a resignation, early retirement, or termination, each employee shall have the right to continue the same coverage of his/her insurance and dependent coverage under the COBRA Plan. Please see the Benefit Department.

## *TRANSFER OF SICK DAYS*

If a new certified employee has previously taught in a public school system in Tennessee, the unused sick leave days can be transferred to Coffee County Schools. Out-of-state sick leave is not transferable. The new employee is responsible for requesting the transfer of the available unused sick leave days from the previous employer. Contact payroll for more information.

## *TEACHING EXPERIENCE*

Prior teaching experience may count for salary purposes. The appropriate information must be submitted and accepted at the local level before a new employee can be compensated for the experience on the salary schedule. It is the educator's responsibility to submit the forms appropriately and complete indicating in-state and out-of-state experience as soon as possible after an offered teaching position is accepted. A separate form must be submitted for each school system in which the new employee was employed. The school system will verify this submitted information as this information is no longer maintained at the state level.

## *CLASSIFIED EXPERIENCE*

Neither sick leave nor years of experience from another school system can be transferred to the Coffee County School System.

## **Salary/Benefits**

## *PAY DAY*

Pay day is the fifteenth of every month. If the fifteenth falls on a weekend, the last previous working day is recognized as the payday.

## *DIRECT DEPOSIT*

All employees must have their pay automatically deposited. A form and blank voided check or deposit slip is required to ensure that the appropriate tracking number is used. An electronic notice of wages and deductions is available to every employee at <https://www.my-estub.com>.

## **Time Sheets**

All classified employees must fill out a timesheet at the end of every month and turn it into their immediate supervisor. The timesheet provides the appropriate supporting documentation for the processing of payroll.

## **Workers Compensation**

The Board shall maintain adequate workers' compensation coverage according to state statutes and shall post and maintain in a conspicuous place on the business premises a printed notice regarding worker's compensation as prescribed by the commissioner of labor and workforce development. The claim must be reported and filed within twenty-four (24) hours of the occurrence of the injury.

The Board shall establish a medical panel consisting of at least three (3) or more reputable physicians or surgeons, not associated together in practice, if available. Any claimant may select an operating surgeon or attending physician listed on the medical panel for treatment of on-the-job injuries. Any specialized treatment of injuries must be administered by practitioners or specialists upon referral by the medical panel. In the event an employee is injured on the job while working for the Coffee County School System and the employee receives Workmen's Compensation benefits, the board will pay the difference between the normal/usual salary and the Workmen's Compensation benefit payment.

The Board salary payment shall not exceed one-third (1/3) the usual salary of the employee. The payment by the Board shall be paid to the employee for the day(s) they are receiving Workman's Compensation benefits not to exceed thirty (30) working days. The Board will also continue to pay the individual insurance premium, for the employee during the thirty (30) day maximum benefit period. If the individual has family coverage, they must pay for the family coverage on a monthly basis, lump sum, or payroll deduction.

### *RETURN TO WORK FOR WORK RELATED INJURIES*

A doctor's release must be submitted prior to the employee's actual return to work. If temporary or alternative duty assignments are needed for an employee who has been released to return to work for light or restrictive duty by the treating physician, please contact the Central Office.

### **Time Staff Schedules** (policy 5.602)

#### *WORK SCHEDULES*

The workday for full-time licensed and professional staff will be a minimum of seven hours and thirty minutes and will continue until professional responsibilities to the student and the school are completed. Administrative meetings, curriculum development, student supervision, assigned duties, parent conferences, group or individual planning and extra-curricular activities may require hours beyond the stated minimum. Teachers shall be allotted a duty-free planning period of two and one-half (2 1/2) hours each week to provide time for planning, preparation for effective teaching and attention to major program improvement. Work schedules for other employees will be defined by the director of schools or his/her designee, consistent with the Fair Labor Standards Act and provisions of this policy.

#### *WORKWEEK DEFINED*

Working hours for all employees not exempted under the Fair Labor Standards Act,<sup>3</sup> including secretaries, bus drivers, cafeteria, janitorial and maintenance personnel, will conform to federal and state regulations. The director of schools will ensure that job positions are classified as exempt

or non-exempt and that employees are made aware of such classifications. Supervisors will make every effort to avoid circumstances which will require non-exempt employees to work more than forty (40) hours each week. For purposes of compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act, the workweek for school district employees will be 12:00 a.m. Saturday until 11:59 p.m. Friday.

### *OVERTIME AND COMPENSATORY TIME*

The Board discourages overtime work by non-exempt employees. A non-exempt employee will not work overtime without the express approval of his/her supervisor. All overtime work must be expressly approved in writing by the director of schools or his/her designee. All supervisory personnel must monitor overtime on a weekly basis and report such time to the director of schools/designee. Principals and supervisors will monitor employees' work, will ensure that overtime provisions of this policy and the Fair Labor Standards Act are followed and will ensure that all employees are compensated for any overtime worked. Principals or supervisors may need to adjust daily schedules to prevent non-exempt employees from working more than forty (40) hours in a workweek. Accurate and complete timesheets of actual hours worked during the workweek will be signed by each employee and submitted to the finance director. The finance director will review work records of employees on a regular basis to make an assessment of overtime use.

In lieu of overtime compensation, non-exempt employees may receive compensatory time off at a rate of not less than one and one-half (1.5) hours for one hour of overtime worked, if such compensatory time (1) is pursuant to an agreement between the employer and employee reached before overtime work is performed, and (2) is authorized by the immediate supervisor.

Employees will be allowed to use compensatory time within a reasonable period after requesting such use if the requested use of the compensatory time does not unduly disrupt the operation of the school division. Employees may accrue a maximum of 240 compensatory time hours before they will be provided overtime pay at the rate earned by the

employee at the time the employee receives such payment. In addition, upon leaving the school division, an employee must be paid for any unused compensatory time at the rate of not less than the higher of (1) the average regular rate received by the employee during his/her last three (3) years of employment, or (2) the final regular rate received by the employee.

Non-exempt employees whose workweek is less than forty (40) hours will be paid at the regular rate of pay for time worked up to forty (40) hours. Such employees shall be provided overtime pay or compensatory time as provided for working more than forty (40) hours in a workweek.

This policy shall be included in the staff handbook, however, employees will be provided with a copy of this policy and will be required to sign this policy to acknowledge their understanding of overtime and compensatory time provisions. Such signed policy shall be placed in the employee's personnel file and shall constitute the written agreement in this section.

### *ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS*

All employees are expected to be present during all work hours. Absence without prior approval, chronic absences, habitual tardiness or abuses of designated working hours are all considered neglect of duty and will result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

### **Ethics** (policy 5.611)

An effective educational program requires the services of men and women of integrity, high ideals and human understanding. To maintain and promote these essentials, all employees are expected to maintain high standards in their school relationships. These standards include the following:

1. The maintenance of just and courteous professional relationships with student, parent(s), staff members and others;

2. The maintenance of their own efficiency and knowledge of the developments in their fields of work;
3. The transaction of all official business with the properly designated authorities of the school system;
4. The establishment of friendly and intelligent cooperation between the community and the school system;
5. The representation of the school system on all occasions that the contributions of the school system to the community are recognized;
6. The welfare of children is the first concern of the school system when placing professional personnel. The use of pressure on school officials for appointments or transfers is unethical;
7. Restraint from using school contacts and privileges to promote partisan politics, sectarian religious views or selfish propaganda of any kind;
8. The responsibility to make any criticism of other staff members or of the school system directly to the particular school administrator who has the administrative responsibility for improving the situation and then to the Director of Schools, if necessary; and
9. The proper use and protection of all school properties, equipment and materials

### **Coffee County Schools Personnel Dress Code Guidelines**

It is imperative that all employees of the Coffee County School System project an appropriate professional image for the students and community. Each employee, while exercising his/her right in an individual way, will show a high degree of respect for the standards of decency, cleanliness and style generally accepted by the school and community.

Employees are expected to use good judgment in the selection of dress for work and to maintain neatness and cleanliness. No apparel, dress or grooming, which is or may become potentially disruptive of the classroom atmosphere or educational process, will be permitted.

- Skirts/dresses must be no shorter than 3 inches above the middle of the knee
- Sleeveless shirts/dresses must have fitted armholes and adequate shoulder width to cover undergarment. (No tank tops / spaghetti straps)
- Blue Jeans with school spirit shirts or dress shirts may be worn as determined by each school principal or supervisor. No jeans with frays, rips, or holes.
- Hair, piercings, tattoos, or other body art should not be disruptive to the educational process.

The following are considered **inappropriate**:

- Revealing apparel
  - No part of an undergarment should be visible. (Bra straps, underwear, etc)
  - No ‘see through’ clothing, low-cut tops (No Cleavage), midriffs or revealing slits in skirts
- Inappropriately sized apparel.
  - Clothes must fit properly
  - No baggy or sagging clothes (shirts and/or pants)
- Athletic wear
- Spandex, leggings (worn as pants)

The Principal or Supervisor shall have the authority to determine what is acceptable in maintaining a conducive educational environment in their school.

In teaching positions that require “alternative dress”, prior approval of the Principal or Supervisor must be obtained.

Custodians, maintenance, transportation and food service staff must wear appropriate clothing as approved and/or furnished by the school district.

These guidelines apply to all Coffee County employees. Appropriate clothing, as well as safety, should be considered at all times in relation to the assigned job.

*A Good Rule of Thumb – “If in doubt ... don’t wear it.”*

## **Drug Free Workplace** (Policy 1.804)

No employee shall unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess or use on or in the workplace, or be under the influence of alcohol or any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana or any other controlled substance, as defined in federal law “Workplace” shall include any school building or any school premise; any school-owned or any other school-approved vehicle used to transport students to and from school or school activities; and off-school property during any schools sponsored or school-approved activity, event or function. As a condition of employment, each employee shall notify the director of schools of his/her conviction on any criminal drug statute for violation occurring in the workplace as defined above no later than five (5) days after conviction. Any employee who violates the terms of this policy shall be suspended and shall be subject to dismissal and referral for prosecution. The director of schools shall be responsible for providing a copy of this policy to all school system employees.

## **Drug and Alcohol Testing for Employees** (Policy 5.403)

### *PRE-EMPLOYMENT DRUG SCREENING*

Prior to employment, as a condition of any job offer, substance screens will be required for individuals applying for employment with the school system.

Applicants will sign an acknowledgement prior to substance screening, permitting the summary result to be sent to the director of schools/designee.

Refusal to sign the acknowledgment or to submit to substance screening will be considered as withdrawal of the individual’s application for



employment. The applicant will not be permitted to reapply for employment for at least (12) twelve months.

If substance screening shows a confirmed positive result for which there is no current physician's prescription, any job offer will be revoked. The applicant will not be permitted to reapply for employment for at least (12) twelve months.

### *RANDOM DRUG TESTING*

In the event that evidence arises to indicate that the Coffee County School System employees have engaged a pattern of systematic abuse of drugs and alcohol, and the Director further finds that the use of Reasonable Suspicion Drug Testing, as outlined below, is not a sufficient deterrent to such use, the Director may implement a program of random, suspicion less drug testing among safety-sensitive employees. Any such program should be implemented with the highest regard for the privacy of those taking part in the testing and shall be tailored to meet the goal of deterrence and investigation, while respecting the constitutional rights of those impacted by the testing.

### *REASONABLE SUSPICION DRUG TESTING*

Trained supervisors have the responsibility to observe and document the cause for reasonable suspicion and when appropriate, refer the matter to the director of schools/designee. It is not the supervisor's responsibility to attempt diagnosis. All information, facts and circumstances leading to and supporting this suspicion, should be included in a written report detailing the basis for the suspicion. After the report is filed, the employee should be notified.

Any employee may be required to submit to substance screening if the following conditions exist: (list is not inclusive)

Observed use, possession or sale of illegal drugs and/or use, possession, sale, or abuse of alcohol and/or prescription drugs.

Apparent physical state of impairment of motor functions.

Marked changes in personal behavior not attributed to other factors.

Employee involvement in or contribution to an accident where the use of alcohol or drugs is reasonably suspected or employee involvement in a

pattern of repetitive accidents whether or not they involve actual or potential injury.

Violation of criminal statutes involving the use of illegal drugs, alcohol or prescription drugs and/or violations of drug statutes.

### *TESTING FOR CDL EMPLOYEES*

All drivers and applicants for driver positions who are required to hold a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) to perform their job function must adhere to the requirements of this policy and all procedures relating to this policy.

The use, possession, sale, purchase or transfer of any controlled substances except medically prescribed drugs on school property, while on school business or while operating school vehicles and equipment is prohibited. Drinking alcoholic beverages during working hours, four (4) hours before reporting to work or having any measurable amount of alcohol in their system during working hours is prohibited, whether on or off school property. Working hours include all breaks. Off-duty use of drugs and alcohol is prohibited to the extent that it affects driver's attendance or performance and their ability to pass required DOT alcohol and controlled substance tests. Any violation of this policy is grounds for termination as an employee of the Board and possible legal prosecution. The use of any prescription drug that could affect the central nervous system or one that would impair reaction time shall be reported to the director of schools/director of transportation. Notice shall be given of non-prescription (over-the-counter) drugs being taken on a regular basis. The notice shall include the duration of ingestion and the possible side effects.

### *PROCEDURES*

The execution and enforcement of this policy will follow set procedures to screen bodily fluids, conduct breath testing, and/or search all employee/applicants for alcohol and drug use, and those employees suspected of violating this policy who are involved in a reportable accident or who are periodically or randomly selected. The procedures are designed not only to detect violations of this policy, but also to ensure fairness to each employee. Disciplinary action will be taken as necessary.

### *IMPLEMENTATION*

The director of schools/director of transportation is authorized to implement this policy and procedures for the drug testing program, including a periodic review of the program to address any problems, changes and/or revisions of it, maintenance of all records required by the federal regulations, and determination upon Board approval of how the program will be accomplished, whether in-house, contracted or by consortium.

### *DISSEMINATION*

The director of schools/director of transportation shall be responsible for communicating this policy and the procedures to all employees affected by this policy and shall be accountable for its consistent enforcement. The director of schools/director of transportation is designated to answer questions about this policy, procedures and all other matters involved in alcohol and controlled substance testing of CDL drivers and the reasonable suspicion testing of all other employees.

### **Report of Arrest**

If an employee is arrested for any reason, the employee is to notify his/her immediate supervisor and Human Resources at the Central Office within forty-eight (48) hours of the arrest.

Appropriate disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal will take place if this notice is not provided as required.

### **Sick Leave** (Policy 5.302)

### *PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL*

Professional personnel shall earn one (1) day of sick leave for each month employed during the school year, and these days shall accumulate for an unlimited number of days. Sick leave shall be defined as: illness of a teacher from natural causes or accident, quarantine, or illness or death of a member of the immediate family of a teacher, including the teacher's wife or husband, parents, grandparents, children, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, brother-in-law, and sister-in-law. A signed statement listing the cause of absence shall be provided by the employee on forms furnished by the director of schools and shall promptly be given to the immediate supervisor in support of all claims for sick leave pay. A falsified statement shall be grounds for dismissal. A certificate from the physician on forms furnished by the Board may be required in support of any claim for sick leave pay. The principal shall notify the director of schools' office at once if an employee is sick beyond the limit of his/her sick leave accumulation. Permanent, cumulative sick leave records for each active professional employee shall be kept in the director of schools' office. A teacher, upon employment, may transfer his/her accumulated sick leave from another Tennessee school system, provided that the director of schools of the system in which the accumulated leave was held provides notarized verification. Sick leave for maternity purposes may be taken during the period of physical disability only. A teacher may use up to thirty (30) days of accumulated sick leave for the adoption of a child. If both adoptive parents are teachers, only one parent may request leave. Written verification from the adoption agency or other entity handling the adoption shall be required before the leave is granted.

*SUPPORT PERSONNEL* Support personnel shall earn one (1) day of sick leave for each month an employee is employed. At the termination of the employment of any employee, all unused sick leave accumulated by the employee shall be forfeited. The immediate supervisor may require a physician's certificate stating the reason for absence.

### *SICK LEAVE BANK*

The purpose of the sick leave bank is to provide sick leave to all participating employees who have suffered an unplanned personal illness, injury, disability, or quarantine and whose personal sick leave is exhausted. To form a sick leave bank, a minimum of twenty (20) employees from the school system shall petition the Board for permission to establish a sick leave bank. Upon approval, sick leave bank trustees shall be appointed and shall operate as the governing body of the sick leave bank and shall enact rules and regulations consistent with state law. Employees wishing to participate shall initially give a maximum of three (3) days of sick leave. These days are to be deducted from the employee's personal accumulation and donated to the sick leave bank. Donations of sick leave to the bank are nonrefundable and nontransferable. At any time the number of days in the sick leave bank is less than twenty (20), or one (1) per employee if there are more than twenty (20) members, or at any time deemed advisable, the trustees shall assess each member one (1) or more days of accumulated sick leave. If an employee has no accumulated sick leave at the time of assessment, the first earned days shall be donated as they are accrued by the employee. An employee who is a member of the sick leave bank may request an allotment of days (for the employee's personal illness only) in the manner designated by the trustees. The need for these days must be verified by a statement from a doctor. By written notice to the trustees, an employee may withdraw from bank participation on June 30 of any year. Membership withdrawal results in forfeiture of all days contributed. The sick leave bank shall be operated in accordance with state law.

### **Personal, Professional, and Bereavement Leave** (Policy 5.303)

Personal and professional leave shall be granted in accordance with laws of the State of Tennessee and rules and regulations of the State Board of

Education. Certified employees shall earn personal and professional leave at the rate of one (1) day for each half- year employed for a total of two (2) days per year. Any personal and professional leave remaining unused at the end of a year shall be credited to sick leave. If, at the termination of services, any employee has been absent for more days than leave has been earned, an amount sufficient to cover the excess days used shall be deducted from the employee's final salary payment. Subject to the following conditions, personal leave may be taken at the discretion of the employee:

1. Except in emergency, each employee shall give the principal at least one day's notice in writing 11 of intent to take leave;
2. The approval of the principal of the school shall be required:
  - a. If more than ten percent (10%) of the teachers in any given school request its use on the same day;
  - b. If requested during any prior established student examination period;
  - c. If requested on the day immediately preceding or following a holiday or vacation period.

Professional leave is a short, temporary absence for the purpose of attending workshops and other meetings relating to school business or serving on boards and commissions which meet during daytime hours when appointed by a mayor, city council, county executive or county commission. Requests shall be submitted to the principal at least five (5) days prior to request leave of absence. In addition, certified employees shall be granted leave to serve on any board or commission of the state<sup>8</sup> when the appointment is made by the Governor or General Assembly. Such leave shall not be counted against any other accumulated leave credits. The employee shall notify the principal at least five (5) 30 days prior to leave being taken. Professional Leave

### *BEREAVEMENT LEAVE*

Full-time employees shall be eligible for three (3) working days of bereavement paid leave in the death of an employee's spouse, children, stepchild, parents, siblings, grandparents, stepparents, foster parents or parents-in-law without charge to the affected employee's accumulated

leave accounts. Bereavement leave requested for anyone other than listed must be approved by the principal/supervisor. Bereavement days cannot be added to accumulated leave or carried over from one school year to another.

**Vacations** (Policy 5.310)

Support personnel shall earn one (1) day of vacation time for each twenty (20) days of employment per work calendar. The time of vacation must be approved by the director of schools and immediate supervisor.

**Holidays**

Support personnel, if on active payroll at the time, shall be entitled to holidays specified on their work calendars. Equivalent days, as approved by the director of schools, may be taken when these days fall on weekends or when school is in session. Unused vacation days of employees who receive vacation days according to their work calendars may accumulate up to the equivalent of two years of vacation earnings (maximum of 30 days). All vacation leave accumulated in excess of the maximum allowed for that employee will automatically be converted into accumulated sick leave at the end of each fiscal year (June 30). Upon termination of services the unused vacation days (maximum of 30 days) can be transferred into sick leave or the employee may be paid for these days.

**Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)** (Policy 5.305)

*PURPOSE*

To entitle employees to take reasonable leave for medical reasons, for the birth or adoption of a child, and for the care of a child, spouse or parent who has a serious health condition.

*ELIGIBILITY*

Anyone who has been employed for at least twelve (12) months by the school system and anyone who has at least 1,250 hours of service (Hours

used for leave, even FMLA leave, shall not be credited for service for purposes of FMLA eligibility) during the previous twelve month period.

### *GENERAL PRINCIPLES*

1. Any employee shall be granted, upon request, up to twelve (12) weeks unpaid leave for the birth or adoption of a child or the care of a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious health condition. (Any employee requesting leave due to pregnancy, childbirth, or adoption shall be granted up to four (4) months leave.)
2. Any employee on maternity leave shall be permitted to use accumulated sick leave during the period of actual physical disability only. Otherwise, the maternity leave shall be unpaid leave. A teacher may use up to thirty (30) days of accumulated sick leave for the adoption of a child. If both adoptive parents are teachers, only one parent may request leave. Written verification from the adoption agency or other entity handling the adoption shall be required before the leave is granted.
3. A physician's statement may be required by the Director of Schools when determining the period of actual physical disability.
4. Request for leaves and extension of leaves shall conform to state law governing all leaves of absence.

### *QUALIFYING EXIGENCIES*

Qualifying exigencies include:

Issues arising from a covered service member's short notice deployment (i.e., less days of notice) for a period of seven days from the date of notification;

Military events and related activities, such as official ceremonies, programs, or events sponsored by the military or family support or assistance programs and informational briefings sponsored or promoted by the military, military service organizations, or the American Red Cross that are related to the active duty or call to active duty status of a covered service member;



Making or updating financial and legal arrangements to address a covered service member's absence;

Attending counseling provided by someone other than a health care provider for oneself, the covered service member, or the child of the covered service member, the need for which arises from the active duty or call to active duty status of the covered service member;

Taking up to 15 days of leave to spend time with a covered service member who is on short-term temporary, rest and recuperation leave during deployment;

Attending to certain post-deployment activities, including attending arrival ceremonies, reintegration briefings and events, and other official ceremonies or programs sponsored by the military for a period of 90 days following the termination of the covered service member's active duty status, and addressing issues arising from the death of a covered service member;

Any other event that the employee and employer agree is a qualifying exigency.

### *RESTRICTIONS*

1. For foreseeable leave, the employee shall provide the Director of Schools with at least thirty (30) days written notice before the beginning of the anticipated leave.
2. The director may require that a request for leave be supported by certification issued by a healthcare provider with the following information:
  - a. the date on which the serious health condition commenced;
  - b. the probable duration of the condition;
  - c. the appropriate medical facts within the knowledge of the health care provider regarding the Monitoring: condition; and
  - d. a statement that the eligible employee is needed to care for the son, daughter, spouse or parent and an estimate of the amount of time that such employee is needed.
3. If there is any reason to doubt the validity of the certification provided, the director may require, at the expense of the school system, an opinion of a second health care provider.

4. Once it has been established that the leave requested qualifies for FMLA, the Director of Schools/ designee shall notify the employee within two (2) business days (absent extenuating circumstances) that —  
Any leave taken pursuant to state leave statutes (paid vacation leave, personal leave, sick leave or worker's compensation) shall run concurrently with FMLA leave. The notice may be given orally or in writing. If the notice is oral, it shall be confirmed in writing, no later than the following pay day.
5. Intermittent Leave - When a licensed employee requests foreseeable leave for planned medical treatment and the employee would be on leave for greater than 20% of the total number of working days in the period during which the leave would extend, the school may require that such employee elect either to take the leave for periods of a particular duration, not to exceed the duration of the planned medical treatment or to transfer temporarily to an available alternative position offered by the school system for which the employee is qualified, and that has equivalent pay and benefits and better accommodates recurring periods of leave.
6. Period Near the End of an Academic Term (Professional employees) - If leave is taken more than five (5) weeks prior to the end of the term, the Director of Schools may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if the leave is at least three (3) weeks of duration and the return of employment would occur during the three (3) week period before the end of the term. If the leave is taken five (5) weeks prior to the end of the term, the Director of Schools may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the term if the leave is greater than two (2) weeks duration and the return to employment would occur during the two (2) week period before the end of the term.
  - a. any employee eligible under state law who requests leave due to pregnancy, childbirth, or adoption shall be granted up to four (4) months leave. FMLA leave for birth and care of a

newborn child or for placement of a child for adoption or foster care, shall run concurrently with the state leave.

- b. spouses who are both eligible employees of the school district are limited to a combined total of 12 workweeks of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period if the leave is taken for birth and care of a newborn child, for placement of a child for adoption or foster care, or to care for a parent who has a serious health condition. Under certain circumstances, spouses who share such leave may be eligible for limited amounts of additional leave for other qualifying FMLA reasons.

### ***REQUIREMENTS OF THE BOARD***

1. The employee shall be restored to the same position of employment or an equivalent position with no loss of benefits, pay or other terms of employment.
2. The employee shall be kept under any group health plan for the duration of the leave.
3. The Board may recover the premium paid under the following conditions:
  - a. the employee fails to return from leave after the period of leave has expired.
  - b. the employee fails to return to work for a reason other than the continuation, recurrence, or FMLA Leave 5.305 onset of a serious health condition or other circumstances beyond the control of the employee.

### **MILITARY CAREGIVER LEAVE**

An eligible employee who is a spouse, child, parent, or next of kin of a covered service member or covered veteran with a serious injury or illness shall be granted up to a total of 26 workweeks of unpaid leave during a “single 12-month period” to care for the covered service member or covered veteran. A covered service member is a 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. A covered veteran is an individual who was a member of the Armed Forces at any time during the period of 5 years preceding the date of the medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy that has a serious injury or illness who is currently receiving medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy. The calculation of this 5-year period shall not include the interval of October 28, 2009 through March 8, 2013.

For covered service members, a serious injury or illness is one that was incurred by a service member in the line of duty on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform the duties of his or her office, grade, rank, or rating. For covered veterans, a serious injury or illness is defined as:

- i. A continuation of a serious injury or illness that was incurred or aggravated in the line of duty while on active duty that rendered the veteran unable to perform the duties of the veteran's office, grade, rank, or rating;
- ii. A physical or mental condition for which the veteran has received a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Service Related Disability Rating (VASRD) of 50 **percent** or higher and such VASRD rating is based, in whole or in part, on the condition precipitating the need for military caregiver leave;
- iii. A physical or mental condition that substantially impairs the veteran's ability to secure or follow a substantially gainful occupation by reason of a disability or disabilities related to military service, or would do so absent treatment; or
- iv. an injury, including a psychological injury, on the basis of which the veteran has been enrolled in the Department of Veterans Affairs Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers.

The “single 12-month period” for leave to care for a covered service member or covered veteran with a serious injury or illness begins on the

first day the employee takes leave for this reason and ends 12 months later, regardless of the 12-month period established by the employer for other types of FMLA leave. An eligible employee is limited to a combined total of 26 workweeks of leave to provide care for a covered service member. The maximum of 26 workweeks may include no more than 12 workweeks of leave that is taken for the birth and care of a newborn child, for placement of a child for adoption or foster care, for care of a parent who has a serious health condition, or for the employee's own serious health condition.

### **Emergency and Legal Leave** (Policy 5.301)

#### *EMERGENCY LEAVE*

An immediate supervisor may grant a certified employee emergency leave during the workday for a sudden, unexpected occurrence demanding immediate attention. Leave shall be taken as personal leave, 14 sick leave or leave without pay. The employee who uses emergency leave shall confirm said leave on appropriate forms the day after returning to work. Principals or administrative supervisors shall keep a tally of the amount of time individual employees are released under this policy and when the total time reaches one (1) day, the employee shall be charged with one (1) day of applicable leave.

#### *JURY DUTY*

The following procedures shall regulate the leave for jury duty for teachers:

1. The teacher shall present written evidence that s/he had been summoned to serve on a jury; and
2. The teacher shall be entitled to the usual compensation, less the amount paid by the court.

## *COURT APPEARANCES*

If a teacher appears in state court because of a personal interest, whether as a plaintiff, defendant or witness or voluntarily appears on behalf of family or friends, or when a teacher is required to appear in court either as a defendant or plaintiff in a civil case, personal leave or leave without pay shall be granted in accordance with the established board policies on leaves.

## *SUPPORT PERSONNEL*

Support personnel called for jury duty or who serve as court witnesses shall present the subpoena or other documents which give reporting instructions to the immediate supervisor. The employee shall obtain a form indicating the days served and the court pay to be received from the court's clerk for submitting to the payroll office. The employee shall receive the usual compensation less the amount paid by the court.

## **Leave of Absence** (Policy 5.304)

Anytime an employee is to be off from work more than ten (10) consecutive days, a leave request must be made to the Director of Schools. The fact that one has sick leave to cover the days off has no bearing on the leave request due to the fact that the leave can be paid or unpaid.

Any person holding a position requiring a license to teach shall be granted leave for military service, legislative service, maternity, adoption, and recuperation of health, educational improvements or other sufficient reason without loss of accumulated leave credits, tenure status, or other fringe benefits.

All leaves shall be requested in writing at least thirty (30) days in advance on forms provided by the Director of Schools. The 30-day notice may be waived or reduced by the Director of Schools upon submission of a certified statement by a physician. The application for leave forms shall require:

1. A description of the type of leave requested;
2. The requested dates for beginning and ending the leave; and

3. A statement of intent to return to the position from which leave is granted.

Each request for leave must be acted upon by the Director of Schools within fifteen (15) days. Each applicant shall be notified in writing of the action of the director and the beginning and ending dates of the leave which is granted. All leaves, except military leave, shall be from a specific date to a specific date. However, any leave may be extended by the Director of Schools upon written request from the teacher. Military leave shall be granted for whatever period may be required. The procedure and condition for extending a leave are the same as those used when originally requesting and granting the leave.

Positions vacated for less than twelve (12) months by teachers on leave shall be filled with an interim teacher while the teacher is on leave.

If the teacher returns from leave within 12 months, the interim teacher shall relinquish the position.

If the leave exceeds twelve (12) months, the teacher shall be placed in the same or a comparable position upon return.

Part-time leaves may be granted by the Director of Schools upon written request for the same conditions as for full-time leave.

Any teacher on leave shall notify the Director of Schools at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of return if the teacher does not intend to return to the position from which he/she is on leave.

Failure to give such notice shall be considered breach of contract.

### *PAY AND BENEFITS*

All leave granted in conformance with this policy shall be without pay except as may be covered by sick leave in the case of maternity and recuperative leaves. Employees shall have the opportunity to continue participation, at their own expense, in group insurance plans subject to restrictions of the insuring carrier. Employees who take leave under the provisions of the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) shall have the same portion of their insurance premiums paid by the Board as is paid for active employees. This leave is limited to twelve (12) weeks and subject to the restrictions and conditions of the Family and Medical Leave Act.

## Resignation/Retirement

If an employee decides to resign or retire they must complete the resignation/retirement form and have the school principal/supervisor sign the form and return it to Human Resources. All employees who are planning on retiring can make an appointment with:

Tennessee Consolidated Retirement

15<sup>th</sup> Floor, Andrew Jackson Building

Nashville, TN 37243-0201

Phone (800) 770-8277

E-mail:

[TCRS.Counseling@tn.gov](mailto:TCRS.Counseling@tn.gov)

or [TCRS.Members-Services@tn.gov](mailto:TCRS.Members-Services@tn.gov)

Website: <http://www.treasury.state.us/tcrs/>

### *RESIGNATION OF CERTIFIED EMPLOYEES*

A teacher shall give the Director of Schools notice of resignation at least thirty (30) days before the effective date of the resignation. A teacher who fails to give such notice, in the absence of justifiable extenuating circumstances, shall forfeit all tenure status. The Board may waive the thirty (30) days' notice requirement and permit a teacher to resign in good standing. The conditions under which it is permissible to break a contract with the Board are as follows:

1. The incapacity on the part of the teacher to perform the contract as evidenced by the certified statement of a physician approved by the Board;
2. The release by the Board of the teacher from the contract which the teacher has entered into with the Board.
3. Any teacher on leave shall notify the Director of Schools in writing at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of return if the teacher does not intend to return to the position from which he/she has taken leave. Failure to render such notice may be considered a breach of contract. Upon a breach of contract, the Board, upon a motion recorded in its minutes, may file a complaint with the Commissioner and request the suspension of a teacher's certificate.



After the Commissioner has provided the teacher an opportunity for defense during a hearing, the Commissioner may suspend the certificate for no less than thirty (30) and no more than three hundred sixty-five (365) days.

### *RETIREMENT OF CERTIFIED EMPLOYEES*

Retirement shall mean a termination of services under conditions which will allow the employee to draw benefits from retirement plans and/or social security benefits. Employees eligible for retirement benefits may elect to retire at any age according to the provisions of the retirement system. The benefit coordinator shall assist employees in securing retirement benefits; however, it shall be the responsibility of the retiring employee to provide verification of eligibility in writing from TCRS to the Central Office. It shall be the responsibility of the retiring employee to file for benefits. Employees who retire under TCRS may be employed up to one hundred twenty (120) days per year without loss of retirement benefits. Retired teachers may substitute teach for an additional ninety (90) days if the Director of Schools certifies in writing to the Board that no other qualified personnel are available to substitute teach. The Director of Schools may employ teachers retired for at least one year for full-time employment as a kindergarten through twelfth grade teacher on a year-to-year basis. Retirement benefits will not be lost or suspended under certain conditions, which include but are not limited to the following:

1. The Director of Schools of the employing system must certify in writing that no other qualified individuals are available to fill the position;
2. The Commissioner of Education must certify that the employing school system serves an area that lacks qualified teachers to serve in the position to be filled;
3. The retired teacher must hold a valid license and shall not be entitled to tenure status;
4. The retired teacher shall not be eligible to accrue additional retirement benefits, accrued leave or receive medical insurance coverage; and

5. The salary paid to the retired member shall not be less than the rate of compensation set by the Board for teachers with no experience filling similar positions, nor more than eighty-five percent (85%) of the rate of compensation set by the Board for teachers with comparable training and years of experience filling similar positions.

#### *RESIGNATION OF SUPPORT PERSONNEL*

Support personnel shall give the immediate supervisor written notice of resignation at least two (2) weeks (ten (10) working days) in advance of the effective date of voluntary termination. The ten (10) working days may be waived by the director of schools for justifiable reason. The immediate supervisor shall forward copies, the day received to the director of schools' office. The payroll office will prepare final payment for the next appropriate scheduled payday.

#### *RETIREMENT OF SUPPORT PERSONNEL*

Retirement shall mean a termination of services under conditions which will allow the employee to draw benefits from retirement plans and/or social security benefits. Employees eligible for retirement benefits may elect to retire at any age according to the provisions of the retirement system. Central office personnel shall assist employees in securing retirement benefits; however, it shall be the responsibility of the retiring employee to provide verification of eligibility in writing from TCRS to the central office. It shall be the responsibility of the retiring employee to file for benefits. Employees who retire under TCRS may be employed up to one-hundred-twenty (120) days per year without loss of retirement benefits.

### **Personnel Records**

Personnel records are maintained for all employees. The Director of Schools/designee shall maintain all personnel records and shall permit the inspection of the same. Personnel records are considered to be public records; this means that anyone can request to view an employee's personnel record. The consent of the employee is not

required. To view a record you must give adequate notice and fill out a request form. Someone from the Central Office must be present when viewing a personnel file. Personnel records may contain the following:

- Application
- Experience records
- Transcripts
- Teaching License
- Evaluation Documents
- Disciplinary Records
- Professional growth Plans
- Letters or certificates of accomplishments or reprimands
- Other items

## **Teaching License**

All certified employees are responsible for securing a license and maintaining its validity. A valid license is required for the employment of a teacher in a teaching position.

All certified employees must have an active account with [TNCompass.org](http://TNCompass.org)

For more information regarding licensing, please contact:

Tennessee State Department of Education  
Office of Teacher Licensing  
12<sup>th</sup> Floor, Andrew Johnson tower  
710 James Robertson Parkway  
Nashville, TN 37243-0377  
Phone (615) 532-4885  
FAX (615) 532-7858

Any change in a teacher's name, address, or endorsement should be made immediately to Human Resources at the Central Office.

## **EVALUATION** (policy 5.109)

The evaluation of performance and its effectiveness must be a cooperative and shared endeavor on the part of the director of schools and administrative and supervisory personnel. The Board shall use a state-approved model for evaluating administrative and supervisory personnel and shall approve standard forms to be used in evaluating support personnel. The director of schools is responsible for ensuring that all administrative and supervisory personnel are evaluated annually.

### *LICENSED TEACHING PERSONNEL*

The Board adopts the State evaluation model. The director shall draft procedures to ensure that the model is implemented throughout the school system. Additionally, the director of schools shall provide information to all licensed teaching personnel regarding the nature of the evaluation and the grievance procedures prescribed by the Tennessee State Board of Education. Local Level Grievance Procedure The director of schools shall develop procedures, consistent with State law, for processing evaluation grievances.

### *LICENSED TEACHING PERSONNEL*

The Board adopts the State evaluation model. The director shall draft procedures to ensure that the model is implemented throughout the school system. Additionally, the director of schools shall provide information to all licensed teaching personnel regarding the nature of the evaluation and the grievance procedures prescribed by the Tennessee State Board of Education.

### *LOCAL LEVEL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE*

The director of schools shall develop procedures, consistent with State law, for processing evaluation grievances.

## **Evaluation Grievance Procedures**

Per Tennessee Code Annotated §49-1-302 principals and teachers may challenge the following relative to evaluations:

- Accuracy of the data- Evaluation data must be linked correctly to the right teacher. This does not mean that educators can grieve a disagreement of a score or the formula used to determine the score.
- Adherence to the evaluation policies adopted by the State Board of Education- Educators may grieve procedural errors that could materially affect or compromise the integrity of the evaluation results. This includes not having met the minimum number of required observations for each domain or not having pre- and post-conferences.

Examples of items that principals and teachers may not challenge include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The final score of the summative evaluation or the score of any of its components.
- Minor procedural errors in implementing the evaluation model that do not materially affect or compromise the integrity of the evaluation results.

Grievance forms will be on the system's website under Human Resources/forms and in the office of Human Resource. The following steps shall be followed when grievances are filed under this procedure:

### **Step I** –Grievance reviewed by the evaluator

- A written grievance **MUST** be submitted to the evaluator no later than fifteen (15) days from the date teachers and principals receive the results from each component:
  - Qualitative appraisal, or the final average observation score
  - Student growth measures
  - Other measures of student achievement

If not submitted within the applicable time, the grievance will be considered untimely and invalid.

- The following components are required in each grievance filed:
  - Teacher or principal name, position, school and additional title, if any
  - Name of immediate supervisor
  - Name of evaluator/reviewer

- Date the challenged summative evaluation was received
- Evaluation period in question
- Basis for the grievance, including specifics about the inaccurate data that was used or the procedural error that occurred as part of your evaluation and how this materially affected or compromised your evaluation
- Correction action desired by the grievant
- Sufficient facts or other information to begin an investigation
- Failure to state specific reasons will result in the grievance being considered invalid.
- After receiving the grievance the evaluator shall:
  - Examine the documentation presented by the grievant and such other documentation as may be relevant and available (Investigation and fact finding)
  - Communicate a decision, in writing, to the grievant within fifteen (15) days of receipt of the grievance
  - To allow disputes to be resolved at the lowest level possible, the evaluator may take any action necessary, based on the circumstances, to immediately correct any procedural errors made in the evaluation process.

**Step II-**Grievance reviewed by the Director of Schools or his/her designee who shall have had no input or involvement in the evaluation for which the grievance has been filed.

- A written grievance and a copy of the decision rendered at Step I must be submitted by the grievant party to the Director of Schools no later than fifteen (15) days of receipt of the decision rendered in Step I. A designee may not be used if the grievous party is a principal.
- After receiving the grievance the Director of Schools or his/her designee will:

- Hold informal discussion with the grievant
- Hear facts, allegations and testimony by appropriate witness as practical
- Communicate a decision, in writing, to the grievant within fifteen (15) days of the discussion with the grievant
- To allow disputes to be resolved at the lowest level possible, the Director of Schools may take any action necessary, based on the circumstances, to immediately correct any procedural errors made in the evaluation process

### **Step III-Grievance reviewed by the Board of Education**

- Teachers and principals may request a hearing before the Board of Education by submitting a written grievance and all relevant documentation to the Board of Education within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of the decision rendered in Step II.
- After receiving the grievance and reviewing the record, the Board may:
  - Grant or deny a request for a full Board hearing
  - Affirm or overturn the decision of the Director of Schools with or without a hearing before the Board
- If a full Board hearing is granted, the Board will:
  - Hold such hearing no later than fifteen (15) days after the receipt of a request for a hearing
  - Give written notice of the time and place of the hearing to the grievant, Director of Schools and all administrators involved
  - Communicate its decision, in writing, to all parties no later than thirty (30) days after the conclusion of the hearing
- The Board of Education shall serve as the final step for all grievances

\*For more information regarding evaluations and grievances, you may view the Tennessee Rules and regulations for evaluations at [www.tn.gov/sos/rules/0520/0520-02/0520-02-01.20110729.pdf](http://www.tn.gov/sos/rules/0520/0520-02/0520-02-01.20110729.pdf)

## **Procedures for Granting Tenure** (Policy 5.117)

The Board of Education will grant tenure only to those teachers who can present documentation of a record of excellence as a teacher and who are determined by State guidelines to be considered a "highly qualified" teacher or those making appropriate progress toward achieving that status. The director of schools is responsible for documenting and presenting the recommendation for tenure to the Board of Education. Documentation of a record of excellence in teaching must include:

1. Consistently high ratings on evaluations conducted by the principal and/or other evaluators
2. Specific evidence of effectiveness in teaching students such as test scores, including the annual estimate of teacher effect on student progress
3. Record of attendance for the last five years
4. Recommendation from the principal
5. Other indicators of effectiveness may be included

The following additional guidelines will apply:

1. The decision to grant tenure is solely within the discretion of the Board of Education.
2. The director of schools will recommend persons eligible for tenure.
3. Only those teachers who receive a majority vote of membership of the Board will be granted tenure.
4. Teachers who earn tenure will be honored by the Board in a special ceremony, either at a board meeting or in some other special public event.
5. A teacher who is eligible for tenure, but tenure is denied, shall not be rehired beyond the contract year.



6. No person who has been denied tenure by the Board of Education shall be employed in the school system in any position which requires a license.

#### *TEACHER RETURNING TO EMPLOYMENT*

A teacher who has obtained tenure status in the school system and later resigns shall serve a two-year probationary period upon reemployment, unless the probationary period is waived by the Board upon request of the director of schools. Upon completion of the two-year period, the teacher shall either be recommended by the director for tenure or non-renewed. If tenure is not granted, the teacher cannot continue in employment.

#### **Non-Renewal Notice**

Teachers will be notified within 5 business days following the last instructional day for the school year, if he or she will not be employed for the following school year.

#### **Professional Development Opportunities** (Policy 5.113)

#### *PROFESSIONAL LEARNING*

In-service education is a program of planned activities designed to increase the competencies needed by all personnel in the performance of their responsibilities. Competencies are defined as the knowledge, skills, and attitudes which enable personnel to perform their tasks with maximum effectiveness. Administrative and Supervisory Employees  
These employees shall show evidence of continual professional growth by attendance at in-service programs and institutes, studying professional literature, meeting with other professionals for discussion, and otherwise keeping abreast of research in methodology, curriculum, and student growth and development. Each principal and administrator shall be required to attend the principal-administrator academy for instruction as provided by the TN Department of Education.

Professional Employees A system-wide in-service committee, composed of members from a cross-section of other personnel, shall assess system-wide needs, establish priorities, develop objectives, design activities, and evaluate the in-service program. A minimum of five (5) days of in-service education, each of which shall be equivalent to not less than six (6) hours of planned activities, shall be included in the annual school calendar. In-service credit shall not be given while performing duties which are required as part of regular teaching assignments. The Board shall include in its budget resources for providing the approved in-service activities. Individuals who miss in-service activities must make arrangements with their immediate supervisor to make-up the day(s) missed. Failure to participate in in-service activities may result in the suspension or dismissal of the teachers. In-service day(s) missed may be made up if approved in advance by the principal and director of instruction

### *SUPPORT PERSONNEL*

The immediate supervisor shall be responsible for providing in-service training. Absences to attend meetings relating to the employee's job description may be granted by the director of schools without loss of pay to the employee.

### **Staff-Student Relations** (Policy 5.610)

Staff members shall maintain professional relationships with students at all times and develop wholesome and constructive relationships with them.

Staff members shall be expected to regard each student as an individual and to accord each student the rights and respect that is due.

Staff members shall promote a learning environment that encourages the fulfillment of each student's potential in regard to his/her program, consistent with district goals and with optimal opportunities for students. This goal may be reached by adapting instruction to individual needs, by:

1. Insisting on reasonable standards of scholastic accomplishment for all students;

2. Creating a positive atmosphere in and out of the classroom;
3. Extending courtesy and respect to students; and
4. Treating all students with consistent fairness.

Staff members shall use good judgment in their relationships with students beyond their work responsibilities and/or outside the school setting and shall avoid excessive informal and social involvement with individual students. Any appearance of impropriety shall be avoided. Sexual relationships between employees and students is prohibited.

### **Discrimination/Harassment** (Policy 5.500)

Employees shall be provided a work environment free from sexual, racial, ethnic and religious discrimination/ harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee or any student to discriminate against or harass an employee through disparaging conduct or communication that is sexual, racial, ethnic or religious in nature. The following guidelines are set forth to protect employees from discrimination/harassment. Employee discrimination/harassment will not be tolerated. Discrimination/harassment is defined as conduct, advances, gestures or words either written or spoken of a sexual, racial, ethnic or religious nature which:

1. Unreasonably interfere with the individual's work or performance;  
or
2. Create an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment; or
3. Imply that submission to such conduct is made an explicit or implicit term of employment;
4. Imply that submission to or rejection of such conduct will be used as a basis for an employment decision affecting the harassed employee.

Alleged victims of sexual, racial, ethnic and religious discrimination/harassment shall report these incidents immediately. This report should be made to the immediate supervisor except when the immediate supervisor is the offending party. If the immediate supervisor

is the offending party, the report may be made to the Federal Rights Coordinator or the Director of Schools. Allegations of discrimination/harassment shall be fully investigated (as set forth in Complaints and Grievances 5.501). An oral complaint may be submitted; however, such complaint must be reduced to writing to ensure a more complete investigation. The complaint should include the following information:

- Identity of the alleged victim and person accused;
- Location, date, time and circumstances surrounding the alleged incident; Description of what happened;
- Identity of witnesses;
- and any other evidence available.

The privacy and anonymity of all parties and witnesses to complaints will be respected. However, because an individual's need for confidentiality must be balanced with obligations to cooperate with police investigations or legal proceedings, to provide due process to the accused, to conduct a thorough investigation or to take necessary action to resolve a complaint, the identity of parties and witnesses may be disclosed in appropriate circumstances to individuals with a need to know. A substantiated charge against an employee shall result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. A substantiated charge against a student may result in corrective or disciplinary action up to and including suspension. There will be no retaliation against any person who reports discrimination/harassment or participates in an investigation. However, any employee who refuses to cooperate or gives false information during the course of any investigation may be subject to disciplinary action. The willful filing of a false report will itself be considered harassment and will be treated as such. An employee disciplined for violation of this policy may appeal the decision by contacting the Federal Rights Coordinator or the Director of Schools.

### **Separation Practices for Tenured Teachers** (Policy 5.200)

#### *SUSPENSION PENDING AN INVESTIGATION*

The Director of Schools may suspend a teacher at any time that may seem necessary, pending investigation or final disposition of a case before the board or an appeal. If the matter under investigation is not the subject of an ongoing criminal investigation or a department of children's services investigation, and if no charges for dismissal have been made, a suspension pending investigation shall not exceed ninety (90) days in duration. Under no circumstances shall the Director of Schools suspend a teacher with pay. If vindicated or reinstated, the teacher shall be paid full salary for the period of suspension.

### *SUSPENSION OF THREE DAYS OR LESS*

A Director of Schools/designee may suspend a teacher for incompetence, inefficiency, neglect of duty, unprofessional conduct and insubordination. Before an employee is suspended he/she shall be:

1. provided with written notice, including the reasons for the suspension along with an explanation of the evidence;
2. given an opportunity to respond to the director at a conference, if requested within five (5) days; and
3. given a 13 written decision of the suspension within ten (10) days.

Both parties may be represented by counsel at the conference, which shall be recorded. Under no circumstances shall a Director of Schools suspend a tenured teacher with pay. If reinstated, the tenured teacher shall be paid full salary for the period of suspension, unless suspension without pay is deemed to be an appropriate penalty.

### *DISMISSAL OR SUSPENSIONS GREATER THAN THREE DAYS*

The Board shall maintain a list of qualified individuals who have indicated a willingness to act as impartial hearing officers, as defined under Tennessee law. When charges are made against a tenured teacher, charging the teacher with offenses which may justify dismissal or a suspension greater than three days, the charges shall be made in writing, specifically stating the offenses which are charged and shall be signed by the party or parties making the charges. If, in the opinion of the Board, the charges are of such nature as to warrant the release or a suspension greater than three days of the teacher, the Director of Schools

shall give the teacher a written notice of this decision, a copy of the charges against the teacher, and a copy of a form provided by the Commissioner of Education advising the teacher of his/her legal duties, rights and recourse. A tenured teacher who has been given notice of charges against him/her may within thirty (30) days after receipt of notice give written notice to the Director of Schools of his/her request for a hearing. The Director of Schools shall, within five (5) days after receipt of request, assign a hearing officer from the list maintained by the Board.

The hearing officer shall notify the parties, or their attorney, of the officer's assignment and direct the parties or the attorneys for the parties, or both, to appear before the hearing officer for simplification of issues and the scheduling of the hearing. That hearing shall be set no later than thirty (30) days following receipt of the initial request for a hearing. At the discretion of the hearing officer, all or part of any prehearing conference may be conducted by telephone if each participant has an opportunity to participate, be heard, and to address proof and evidentiary concerns. The hearing officer is empowered to issue appropriate orders and to regulate the conduct of the proceedings. Either party may appeal to the Board of Education an adverse ruling by giving written notice of appeal within ten (10) working days of the hearing officer's delivery of the hearing officer's written findings and conclusions. The Director of Schools shall prepare a copy of the proceedings, including all transcripts and evidence, documentary or otherwise, and transmit the same to the Board within twenty (20) days of the receipt of the notice of appeal. The Board shall hear the appeal on the record, and no new evidence may be submitted by either party. The appealing party may appear before the Board to argue why the adverse ruling should be overturned. In no event should such an argument last more than fifteen (15) minutes, unless the Board should vote to extend additional time. At the conclusion of the hearing, any member of the Board may vote to sustain the decision of the Hearing officer, send the record back for additional evidence, revise the penalty or reverse the decision. The Board shall render its decision within ten (10) working days after the conclusion of the hearing. In the event that the decision of the Board is appealed to the Chancery court, the Board shall transmit the

entire record prepared by the director and reviewed by the Board to the Chancery court for its review.

### **Separation Practices for Non-Tenured Teachers** (Policy 5.201)

#### *SUSPENSION PENDING AN INVESTIGATION*

The Director of Schools may suspend a teacher at any time that may seem necessary, pending investigation or final disposition of a case before the board or an appeal. If the matter under investigation is not the subject of an ongoing criminal investigation or a department of children's services investigation, and if no charges for dismissal have been made, a suspension pending investigation shall not exceed ninety (90) days in duration. Under no circumstances shall the Director of Schools suspend a non-tenured teacher with pay. If vindicated or reinstated, the non-tenured teacher shall be paid full salary for the period of suspension.

#### *SUSPENSION OF THREE DAYS OR LESS*

A Director of Schools/designee may suspend a teacher for incompetence, inefficiency, neglect of duty, unprofessional conduct and insubordination. Before an employee is suspended he/she shall be:

1. provided with written notice, including the reasons for the suspension along with an explanation of the evidence;
2. given an opportunity to respond to the director at a recorded conference, if requested within five (5) days; and
3. given a written decision of the suspension within ten (10) days.

Both parties may be represented by counsel at the conference, which shall be recorded.

#### *DISMISSAL OR SUSPENSION GREATER THAN THREE DAYS*

The Director of Schools may dismiss or suspend for more than three days any non-tenured teacher during the contract year for incompetence, inefficiency, insubordination, improper conduct or neglect of duty after

giving the non-tenured teacher, in writing, due notice of the charges. The Director of Schools shall give the non-tenured teacher an opportunity for a full and complete hearing before an impartial hearing officer. The Board will appoint an impartial hearing officer to conduct such hearings. The hearing officer will hear the case and the employee shall have the right to:

1. be represented by counsel;
2. call and subpoena witnesses;
3. examine all witnesses; and
4. require that all testimony be given under oath.

Factual findings and decisions in all dismissal cases shall be reduced to written form and delivered to the affected employee within ten (10) working days following the close of the hearing. The employee may appeal the decision to the Board within ten (10) working days of the hearing officer rendering the written decision to the employee. Written notice of appeal to the Board shall be given to the Director of Schools. Within twenty (20) days' of receipt of notice, the director shall prepare a copy of the proceedings, transcript, documentary and other evidence presented and provide the Board a copy of the same. The Board shall hear the appeal. No new evidence shall be introduced. The non-tenured teacher may appear in person or be represented by counsel and argue why the decision should be modified or reversed. The Board shall take one of the following actions:

1. sustain the decision;
2. send the record back if additional evidence is necessary; or
3. revise the penalty or reverse the decision.

Before any decision to dismiss is made, a majority of the membership of the Board shall concur in sustaining the charges. The Board shall render a decision on the appeal within ten (10) working days after the conclusion of the hearing. The Director of Schools shall also have the right to appeal any adverse ruling by the Hearing Officer in the same manner as the non-tenured teacher. Within twenty (20) days after receipt of notice of the decision of the Board, either party may appeal to the



chancery court in the county where the school system is located. The Board shall provide the entire record of the hearing to the court.

### *NONRENEWAL*

Non-tenured teachers are subject to the same rules and regulations and are entitled to the privileges of employment enjoyed by tenured teachers except that they have no claim upon continuing employment or tenure protections. The principal is responsible for discussing deficiencies as part of the evaluation process with the non-tenured teacher and providing assistance for overcoming these deficiencies. The Director of Schools is under no obligation to re-employ non-tenured teachers at the end of their contract period. If the Director of Schools determines not to renew the contract of a non-tenured teacher, the following actions shall be taken:

1. The Board shall be notified at the next regular board meeting; and
2. Written notice of nonrenewal shall be hand delivered or sent to the employee by registered mail so that it will be received by the employee prior to June 15.

### **Separation Practices for Non-Certified Employees** (Policy 5.202)

#### *SUSPENSION*

A Director of Schools/designee may suspend an employee at any time when deemed necessary. Before an employee is suspended s/he shall be:

1. provided with reasons for the suspension;
2. given an opportunity to respond; and
3. given a written decision of the suspension.

Under no circumstances shall a Director of Schools suspend an employee with pay. If reinstated, the employee shall be paid full salary for the period of suspension, unless suspension without pay is deemed to be an appropriate penalty.

## *DISMISSAL*

All non-certified (classified) employees are employed at the will of the director. The Director of Schools may dismiss any non-certified employee during the contract year for any reason.

## **Tobacco-Free Schools** (Policy 1.803)

All uses of tobacco and tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco, electronic cigarettes and associated paraphernalia are prohibited in all of the school district's buildings and in all vehicles that are owned, leased or operated by the district. Smoking shall be prohibited in any public seating areas including, but not limited to, bleachers used for sporting events or public restrooms.

District employees and students enrolled in the district's schools will not be permitted to use tobacco or tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco, electronic cigarettes and associated paraphernalia while they are participants in any class or activity in which they represent the school district.

Signs will be posted throughout the district's facilities to notify students, employees and all other persons visiting the school that the use of tobacco and tobacco products is forbidden. The following notice shall be prominently posted (including at each ticket booth) for elementary or secondary school sporting events: Smoking is prohibited by law in seating areas and in restrooms.

## **Use of Internet** (Policy 4.406)

The Board supports the right of staff and students to have reasonable access to various information formats and believes that it is incumbent upon staff and students to use this privilege in an appropriate and responsible manner.

## *EMPLOYEES*

Before any employee is allowed use of the district's Internet or intranet access, the employee shall sign a written agreement, developed by the director/designee that sets out the terms and conditions of such use. Any employee who accesses the district's computer system for any purpose agrees to be bound by the terms of that agreement, even if no signed written agreement is on file. The director of schools shall develop and implement procedures for appropriate Internet use which shall address the following:

1. Development of the Network and Internet Use Agreement.
2. General rules and ethics of Internet access.
3. Guidelines regarding appropriate instruction and oversight of student Internet use.
4. Prohibited and illegal activities, including but not limited to the following:
  - Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
  - Using obscene language
  - Harassing, insulting, defaming or attacking others
  - Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks
  - Hacking or attempting unauthorized access to any computer
  - Violation of copyright laws
  - Trespassing in another's folders, work or files
  - Intentional misuse of resources
  - Using another's password or other identifier (impersonation)
  - Use of the network for commercial purposes
  - Buying or selling on the Internet
5. Guidelines and procedures regarding the retention of email for both staff and students.

### *STUDENTS*

The director of schools shall develop and implement procedures for appropriate Internet use by students. Procedures shall address the following:

1. General rules and ethics of Internet use.
2. Prohibited or illegal activities, including, but not limited to:
  - Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures

- Using obscene language
- Harassing, insulting, defaming or attacking others
- Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks
- Hacking or attempting unauthorized access
- Violation of copyright laws
- Trespassing in another's folders, work or files
- Intentional misuse of resources
- Using another's password or other identifier (impersonation)
- Use of the network for commercial purposes
- Buying or selling on the Internet

### *INTERNET SAFETY MEASURES*

Internet safety measures shall be implemented that effectively address the following:

- Controlling access by students to inappropriate matter on the Internet and World Wide Web
  - Safety and security of students when they are using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications
  - Preventing unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities by students on-line
  - Unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding students
  - Restricting students' access to materials harmful to them

The director of schools/designee shall establish a process to ensure the district's education technology is not used for purposes prohibited by law or for accessing sexually explicit materials. The process shall include, but not be limited to:

- Utilizing technology that blocks or filters Internet access (for both students and adults) to material that is obscene, child pornography or harmful to students
  - Maintaining and securing a usage log
  - Monitoring on-line activities of students

The Board shall provide reasonable public notice of, and at least one (1) public hearing or meeting to address and communicate, its Internet safety measures.

A written parental consent shall be required prior to the student being granted access to electronic media involving district technological resources. The required permission/agreement form, which shall specify acceptable uses, rules of on-line behavior, access privileges and penalties for policy/ procedural violations, must be signed by the parent/legal guardian of minor students (those under 18- 35 years of age) and also by the student. This document shall be executed each year and shall be valid only in the school year in which it was signed unless parent(s) provide written notice that consent is withdrawn. In order to rescind the agreement, the student's parent/guardian (or the student who is at least 18 years old) must provide the director of schools with a written request.

### *EMAIL*

Users with network access shall not utilize district resources to establish electronic mail accounts through third-party providers or any other nonstandard electronic mail system. All data including e-mail communications stored or transmitted on school system computers shall be monitored. Employees/students have no expectation of privacy with regard to such data. E-mail correspondence may be a public record under the public records law and may be subject to public inspection.

### *INTERNET SAFETY INSTRUCTION*

Students will be given appropriate instruction in internet safety as a part of any instruction utilizing computer resources. The director shall provide adequate in-service instruction on internet safety. Parents and students will be provided with material to raise awareness of the dangers posed by the internet and the ways in which the internet may be used safely.

### *SOCIAL NETWORKING*

1. District staff who have a presence on social networking websites are prohibited from posting data, documents, photographs or inappropriate information that is likely to create a material and substantial disruption of classroom activity.

2. District staff are prohibited from accessing personal social networking sites on school computers or during school hours except for legitimate instructional purposes.

3. The Board discourages district staff from socializing with students on social networking websites. The same relationship, exchange, interaction, information, or behavior that would be unacceptable in a non-technological medium is unacceptable when done through the use of technology.

### *VIOLATIONS*

Violations of this policy or a procedure promulgated under its authority shall be handled in accordance with the existing disciplinary procedures of this District.

### **Cellular Phones** (Policy 3.3001)

Cellular phones or data devices may be provided to a limited number of employees when essential to the operation of the school system. The assignment of cellular phones shall be approved by the Director of Schools/designee. The Board shall be financially responsible for the customary minimum monthly bills for pre-approved cellular phones or data devices.

Cellular phones or data devices provided to employees are for official school board business only and any charges incurred for personal purposes except in cases of emergencies shall be the responsibility of the staff. If the monthly bill reflects charges greater than the customary minimum monthly bill, the excess portion shall become the responsibility of the employee to whom the cellular phone has been issued. If the employee wishes to dispute the portion of the monthly bill for which s/he is responsible, the employee may request and become financially responsible for obtaining a listing for phone use during the disputed period of time.

### **Use of Personal Cell Phone**

A personal cell phone may be carried by an employee of Coffee County Schools but it is to be used only in case of an emergency; no personal business shall be conducted on personal cell phones during school hours. Personal cell phones should not be visible since students are not to use cell phones during regular school hours; employees of the school system must serve as appropriate role models.

An employee's cell phone should not ring when and where students are present, or where students can actually see and/or hear the employee using the cell phone. Professionalism is expected at all times.

### **Private Vehicles** (Policy 3.404)

The Board recognizes that certain employees may need to use their private vehicles for school purposes. With the use of private vehicles, the following policy shall be observed:

1. To use a private vehicle for school purposes, the employee must have the written permission of the Director of Schools/ designee and proof of vehicle liability insurance coverage in the following forms:
  - a. A copy of the insurance certificate issued to the insured indicating liability limits of at least \$100,000/300,000/50,000; and
  - b. A specific permit for each trip involving students, including field trips.
2. The school system shall assume no responsibility for liability in case of accident, unless the employee has the proper authorization described above.
3. The Board specifically forbids any employee to transport students for school purposes without prior authorization by the Director of Schools or his/her designee.
4. Privately-owned school buses and drivers of such shall meet all requirements of state law and state Board Rules, Regulations, and Minimum Standards.

5. Students may be sent on school-related errands in a vehicle owned by the student/parent only with compliance of the above liability insurance policy and must have parental permission.
6. No employee may ask for or give permission to students to transport other students to and from any school or school-related activity.

The Board recognizes that volunteer parent drivers are often needed to use their private vehicles for school purposes. The volunteer parent drivers who use a private vehicle must provide proof of vehicle liability insurance coverage in the form of an insurance certificate issued to the insured indicating limits of at least \$100,000/300,000/50,000.

### **Staff Conflict of Interest** (Policy 5.601)

#### *ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL*

Administrative and supervisory personnel shall have no financial interest, directly or indirectly, in supplying books, maps, school furniture, or apparatus for the schools or to act as agent for any author, publisher, bookseller, or dealer in school furniture or apparatus, however a spouse or family member of a principal, teacher or other school administrative employee may participate in business transactions with the school system where a sealed competitive bid system is used, provided that the employee does not have discretion in the selection of bids or specifications. It shall be a misdemeanor for the Director of Schools to take any other contract under the Board, to perform any other service for additional compensation, to act as a principal or teacher in any school, or to become the owner of a school warrant other than that allowed for his/her service as Director of Schools or as secretary to the Board.

#### *PROFESSIONAL AND CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL*

Employees of the Board will not engage in, or have a financial interest in, any activity that raises a reasonable question of conflict of interest with their duties and responsibilities as members of the school staff. This includes but is not limited to the following:



1. School employees may not purchase for sale to students any goods or equipment or render any service to the school system on a commission basis;
2. Employees who have patented or copyrighted any device, publication, or other item will not receive royalties for use of such item in the school system;
3. Employees will not engage in any type of work where the source of information concerning a customer, client, or employer originates from information obtained through the school system;
4. The Board shall make no purchase of supplies, materials, or equipment from a school system employee; and
5. Employees shall not solicit for the purpose of selling instructional supplies, equipment and reference books in a territory that includes the parents of the children of the school in which the employee is assigned.

### **Staff Gifts and Solicitations** (Policy 5.605)

#### *GIFTS*

Employees of the Board shall not accept gifts from students unless the gifts are of token value only. Individual employees of the Board will refrain from giving gifts to staff members who exercise administrative or supervisory jurisdiction over them, either directly or indirectly. The collection of money for group gifts is discouraged except in special circumstances such as bereavement, serious illness, or for mementos at retirement. Employees are prohibited from accepting things of material value from individuals, companies or organizations doing business with the school system. Exceptions to this policy are the acceptance of minor items which are generally distributed to all by the companies through public relations programs.

#### *SOLICITATIONS*

No organization may solicit funds from employees within the schools. Flyers or other materials related to fund drives shall not be distributed through the schools without the written approval of the Director of

Schools. Employees will not be made responsible for the collection of any money or the distribution of any fund drive literature within the schools unless such activity has the Director of Schools written approval.

## **Volunteers**

The school system encourages the constructive participation of groups or individuals in the school to perform appropriate tasks during and after school hours under the direction of a staff member. Every effort should be made to use a volunteer resource in a manner which will ensure maximum contribution to the welfare and educational growth of students.

The school principal should annually request permission (must list the individual names and services to be provided) to the Director of Schools to use the named volunteers. If approved by the Director of Schools, these individuals, like other visitors, must sign-in and sign-out at the school office.

## **Visitors to the Schools** (Policy 1.501)

The Board endorses a volunteer program in the schools and authorizes principals to develop a volunteer program for each school. All volunteers must be approved by the principal and shall serve under the supervision and direction of the professional personnel of the school to which they are assigned. Volunteers shall assist professional personnel in the performance of their teaching and administrative responsibilities. They may not teach but may reinforce skills taught by the professional staff. The principal shall identify appropriate tasks for volunteers and shall be responsible for planning and conducting orientation programs and appropriate in-service training sessions. Volunteers shall serve without compensation but shall be insured by the Board against loss or damage in the performance of their duties

Deliveries made at school which are intended for students will not be accepted by school officials. Persons who come onto school property shall be under the jurisdiction of the site administrator/designee. Individuals who come onto school property or who contact employees on school or district business are expected to behave accordingly. Specifically, actions that are prohibited include, but are not limited to:

1. Cursing and use of obscenities;
2. Disrupting or threatening to disrupt school or office operations;
3. Acting in an unsafe manner that could threaten the health or safety of others;
4. Verbal or written statements or gestures indicating intent to harm an individual or property; and
5. Physical attacks intended to harm an individual or substantially damage property.

The principal or his/her designee has the authority to exclude from the school premises any persons disrupting the educational programs in the classroom or in the school, disturbing the teachers or students on the premises, or on the premises for the purpose of committing an illegal act. The principal shall engage law enforcement officials when he/she believes the situation warrants such measures.